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General Assembly

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Official Records

First Committee

28th Meeting
Thursday, 12 November 1998, 10 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Mernier . . . . (Belgium)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda items 63 to 80 *(continued)*

Action on all draft resolutions submitted under all items

The Chairman: We have been able to obtain an additional meeting this afternoon. After consultations with various delegations, and in the light of other important events taking place in this building, we decided this morning to modify today's programme. Informal paper number 6, which is before the Committee, contains a list of all the draft resolutions remaining for consideration, except draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 and its seven associated amendments. Postponements have already been requested for draft resolutions A/C.1/53/L.11, L.53, L.64, L.16/Rev.1 and L.24/Rev.1, and for document A/C.1/53/L.51, which is an amendment to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.24/Rev.1.

We still have three draft resolutions to consider this morning: A/C.1/53/L.42 and its amendment, A/C.1/53/L.54; A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1; and A/C.1/53/L.4/Rev.1.

Mr. Goosen (South Africa): We have been in discussions with our colleagues from the United States and the Russian Federation on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1. They have attempted to address some of the concerns we expressed regarding that text, but, unfortunately, we did not see the new language until this morning and would need to study it before being in a position to vote on that draft resolution. Accordingly, we would ask for a postponement.

Mr. Hayashi (Japan): We are still in the process of consultation on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42. I hope that the Japanese delegation will come up with a new, revised text this afternoon or evening. I therefore request that action on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42 be postponed.

Mr. Al-Hassan (Oman): At what I know is a very critical time in the work of this Committee, I do not want to make an intervention that is cumbersome to you, Mr. Chairman, or to those delegations that are negotiating on some of the pending draft resolutions that are subject to voting in this Committee. However, it seems that a process of postponement is going on. On the basis of the information we had been given — which is not final, because it is subject to negotiation on the other draft resolutions — we understood that this morning we would be taking action on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. Since this matter is of great importance to my delegation and, I believe, to many others, we have made certain arrangements, including the presence of our Permanent Representatives at these meetings.

I do not wish to prejudge the work. I know, Mr. Chairman, that you are trying to be as flexible as possible, which is the nature of this Committee, and I believe it should be followed through. However, when draft resolutions are to be postponed, we should be informed in advance. I was of the understanding that this morning I would be voting on A/C.1/53/L.22 and the amendments to it.

That is all I wish to say at this stage. I apologize if I am complicating your work, Mr. Chairman. That is not my intention.

This record contains the original texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation does not want to complicate your job either, Mr. Chairman. We have reached a very delicate stage in the Committee's work. However, my delegation has a few concerns about draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.4/Rev.1. Consultations are still under way, and it does not seem that there has been any agreement on the outstanding issues. My delegation would therefore ask that consideration of that draft resolution be postponed.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I thank the Committee for its cooperation. It is by proceeding in this manner that we will make progress. We have no more draft resolutions, then, for this morning.

I again appeal to delegations to reconsider requests for postponements. We are less than 48 hours from the end of the work of this Committee. I would like members to ponder seriously whether their requests for postponements are really warranted. We have more than a hundred delegations here —

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, I think that our colleague from Oman has raised a valid point with regard to the manner in which the Committee is proceeding to deal with various draft resolutions. The Committee under normal circumstances seeks to deal with those draft resolutions on which there is the largest possible convergence of positions, and puts off to a later date those that are controversial and on which negotiations are ongoing, or for which there remains a possibility of obtaining a better result than an outcome dictated by voting and procedural actions.

If those criteria are applied, I believe we should select from among the remaining draft resolutions those on which there is the greatest convergence and proceed to act on them, thereafter coming to other motions or proposals on which there is a wider divergence. Time is running out, and we have to take action, but that action should be dictated by certain criteria: let us act on the easier draft resolutions first and put off to a later stage those that are more difficult.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): No one is more aware than the Chairman that we are approaching the end of our work, that there are two very difficult draft resolutions to be negotiated, and that we have three meetings remaining for this work.

There is the possibility that this morning's meeting, which should have allowed us to vote on relatively well-advanced draft resolutions, will have served no purpose. I therefore propose to suspend the meeting to allow the delegations that have asked for postponement of action on draft resolutions A/C.1/53/L.42, L.49 and L.4 to consult and see whether it would be possible this morning, after the suspension, at least to consider those three draft resolutions.

The meeting was suspended at 10.25 a.m. and resumed at 10.45 a.m.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): Thanks to the goodwill of delegations, we will be able this morning to consider draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1, entitled "Bilateral nuclear arms negotiations and nuclear disarmament". The draft resolution belongs in cluster 1, on nuclear weapons.

Does any delegation wish to make a general statement on cluster 1?

Mr. Goosen (South Africa): I just want to make it clear to you, Sir, that we had been in discussions with both the United States of America and the Russian Federation on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49. Neither the United States nor the Russian Federation had informed us of their decisions on the outcome of those discussions.

This morning, we discovered that the request was that we should take up draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1, without the South African delegation's being given the opportunity of even seeing the language which it was expected to vote upon, because draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1 was distributed only this morning. We would certainly encourage not only these sponsors, but all other sponsors as well, when such situations arise, to attempt to approach them in a different way.

We have had a look at the language and are willing to continue and, as we have discussed privately, to allow the vote on the draft resolution to take place this morning without a requirement to study the language any further than we have already. We do this in a gesture of flexibility directed to you personally, Sir, and in full consideration of the difficulties which you face — and we know the difficulties that you face with regard to time in this Committee. Under normal circumstances, we would have required more time to study the text of this draft resolution.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I thank the representative of South Africa for his cooperation.

I call on the representative of the United States of America to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1.

Mr. Grey (United States of America): On behalf of my own country, the Russian Federation and the other sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49, I would like to introduce the revised version of that draft resolution — in document A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1 — and explain the changes we have made to the original text.

In operative paragraph 8, we have added the words "takes note of the initiative" before the last part of the paragraph, which deals with the possibility of establishing a multilateral pre-launch notification regime. Since this paragraph mentions possible actions by countries other than the original sponsors, some delegations preferred a more neutral reference. We have attempted to meet this preference with the revised language.

As compared to last year's resolution, this year the sponsors have removed the reference to nuclear weapons in what is now operative paragraph 6. The sponsors explained that those words were deleted to take account of the fact, noted in operative paragraph 5, that nuclear weapons have been completely removed from Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine. We have also pointed out that the concept of eliminating nuclear weapons has already found a place in operative paragraph 11. However, in order to make it unmistakably clear that the sponsors have no intention of going back on commitments we have made and which were reflected in last year's resolution, we have added additional language on eliminating nuclear weapons to the text of operative paragraph 11.

The sponsors hope that, with these changes, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1 will receive the broadest possible support.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1.

As no delegation wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the vote, I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1, entitled "Bilateral nuclear arms negotiations and nuclear disarmament", was introduced by the representative of the United States of America at this meeting.

In addition to the sponsors listed in the revised draft resolution, an additional sponsor is listed in document A/C.1/53/INF/2/Add.3, which has just been distributed. The following country has also become a sponsor: Portugal.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Lebanon, Pakistan, Syrian Arab Republic, United Republic of Tanzania

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1 was adopted by 136 votes to none, with 8 abstentions.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Changhe Li (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The Chinese delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1. China attaches great importance to the nuclear disarmament of the United States and Russia, as they are the two biggest nuclear-weapon States and their nuclear disarmament has a big impact on international peace and security. We hope the United States and Russia will continue to make efforts in the field of nuclear disarmament and, as soon as possible, ratify the treaties on the reduction of nuclear weapons and launch START III. It must also be emphasized that reducing the number of nuclear warheads should mean their destruction rather than removal from deployed status to stockpiles.

The Chinese delegation notes that the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty is mentioned in the draft resolution, and its importance is emphasized. We hope the countries concerned will abide by its provisions and not carry out research and development on highly capable theatre missile defence systems with a strategic defensive capability, so as to avoid disrupting the global strategic balance and stability or starting a new round in the arms race.

I also wish to point out that the wording of operative paragraph 8 with regard to examining the possibility of establishing a multilateral ballistic missile and space launch vehicle pre-launch notification regime exceeds the scope of the draft resolution.

Mr. Soutar (United Kingdom): I have asked for the floor with respect to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1, on bilateral nuclear arms negotiations and nuclear disarmament, on which the Committee has just taken action. The United Kingdom strongly supports this draft resolution and the many important steps and initiatives towards nuclear disarmament already taken or envisaged by the United States and the Russian Federation, as well as by Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine.

For its part, the United Kingdom has made it clear that when satisfied with progress towards the goal of nuclear disarmament we will ensure that our remaining nuclear weapons are included in multilateral negotiations. In the meantime, the United Kingdom is actively taking unilateral national measures. The last preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1 briefly acknowledges such steps. However, we consider that, in addition to our ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in April this year, the steps we announced in July this year are of particular significance. Since I have already spelt out the main elements of that announcement in an earlier statement during this session, I will not repeat them in full now, but will only recall that they included significant reductions in the total number of our operationally available warheads and of the warheads carried by each submarine, which will operate at a reduced state of readiness; publishing details of all our defence stocks of fissile material; and placing over 50 per cent of our unsafeguarded plutonium and all reprocessing and enrichment operations under international safeguards.

We consider that these represent substantial steps on the part of the United Kingdom towards the goal of nuclear disarmament, to which, let me repeat again lest any delegation still be in any doubt, the United Kingdom remains wholly and firmly committed.

Mr. Dehghani (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation welcomes any unilateral, bilateral or multilateral efforts towards reducing nuclear arsenals. However, we abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1, for the following reasons.

First, while an overwhelming majority of States insist on international negotiations on nuclear disarmament, some nuclear-weapon States speak solely of reduction and even insist that this issue is best left to bilateral negotiations among the nuclear-weapon States themselves. The nuclear threat is real. The very existence of nuclear weapons menaces the fate of mankind. Therefore, nuclear disarmament is an international concern and should not be confined to bilateral negotiations. The nuclear-weapon States should not remain indifferent to the profound concern of the international community.

Secondly, there is no recognition in the draft resolution of the role of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole negotiating body in the field of disarmament.

Thirdly, there are other elements in the draft resolution that my delegation has no means of substantiating or verifying, such as the fourteenth preambular paragraph, which refers to the significant reductions made by other nuclear-weapon States, as well as other similar references in the draft resolution.

Fourthly, bilateral negotiations on nuclear reduction were a great achievement in the cold-war period. However, in the aftermath of the cold war, with the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons, there remains no justification for the exclusion of the absolute majority of members of the United Nations from negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Benítez Verson (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1 continues to suffer the serious weaknesses we have raised year after year in this Committee without persuading the principal sponsors to take into account our main concerns. Despite last-minute cosmetic changes, we had before us once again a watered-down text praising the nuclear Powers for supposed great progress in the area of nuclear disarmament and clearly lacking a critical and objective focus on the true situation in this priority area.

This is not the way to make the progress that the international community would like us to make towards the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons as quickly as possible. In addition, the bilateral and multilateral approach in negotiations on nuclear weapons cannot be exclusive; there must be complementarity within the context of an overall strategy for nuclear disarmament. This approach is not reflected in the draft resolution that has just been adopted.

For these reasons, the delegation of Cuba once again abstained in the vote on the draft resolution which is this year contained in document A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): My delegation appreciates the efforts being made by the leading nuclear-weapon States to make progress towards nuclear disarmament.

The Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament recognizes the importance of nuclear reductions being made by the two leading nuclear-weapon States, and their responsibility. However, we were not able to join in supporting the draft resolution, for several reasons.

First, by the fifth preambular paragraph the General Assembly would appreciate the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This indefinite extension of the NPT has been construed by some of the nuclear-weapon States concerned with this draft resolution as implying their right to the indefinite extension of possession of nuclear weapons. We believe that this is an unjustified interpretation of the extension of the NPT.

Secondly, we note that in this context, as elsewhere in the draft resolution, there is no reference to the goal of complete nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Thirdly, in the tenth preambular paragraph there is a reference to a joint statement by the United States and the Russian Federation "in connection with the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (ABM Treaty)". We have certain reservations with regard to the interpretations that have now been made of the Treaty that would allow the installation of theatre missile defence systems which we believe will be highly destabilizing for regional as well as global nuclear balance.

Fourthly, the draft resolution welcomes the significant reductions in nuclear weapons. It does not note, however, that these reductions have been made from very high numbers and that the numbers of nuclear weapons which will be retained by the Powers concerned, even after the conclusion of the implementation of START II, will be higher than the numbers which existed at the time of the Cuban missile crisis.

Finally, the draft resolution does not acknowledge the requirement for multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament in the Conference on Disarmament. We believe that that remains the central objective for negotiations in the field of nuclear disarmament, which should be endorsed by the international community, including all the nuclear-weapon States.

It is for these reasons that we abstained in the voting on this draft resolution.

The Chairman: We now come to cluster 6, confidence-building measures, including transparency in armaments.

(spoke in French)

Does any delegation wish to make a general declaration on this cluster? I see none.

Thanks to the cooperation of the delegation of Algeria, we will now consider draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.4/Rev.1.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.4/Rev.1, entitled "Regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa", was introduced by the representative of Cameroon on behalf of States members which are also members of the Economic Community of Central African States, at the 26th meeting of the Committee, on 9 November 1998.

The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in the revised draft itself. There is a correction to be made regarding the sponsors. The asterisk should follow "Cameroon", and, as noted in the revised text, it signifies "On behalf of the States members which are also members of the Economic Community of Central African States".

In connection with this draft resolution, a statement on programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly is contained in document A/C.1/53/L.63.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I call on the representative of Algeria for an explanation of position before a decision is taken on the draft resolution.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): Please allow me at the outset to say, Mr. Chairman, that it is thanks to the cooperation not only of Algeria but also of a number of other delegations involved with draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.4/Rev.1 that the Committee is to take a decision on it this morning.

Consultations have been held in the last few days on this draft resolution, which in its previous forms has traditionally been adopted by consensus. It presented no major difficulties at previous sessions because it did not then contain elements which the sponsors introduced this year for the first time and which we believe should be taken up in other bodies.

The sponsors of the draft resolution feel that the elements contained in the eleventh preambular paragraph and paragraph 8 are important as confidence-building measures. Though my delegation is not opposed to this reasoning, it is almost tempted to ask the sponsors to introduce as confidence-building measures the mitigation of debt, or its elimination, and perhaps the humanization of structural measures applied to many African countries, because they would contribute to the continent's peace and stability.

But, since this is an African draft resolution, and out of solidarity with the countries of Central Africa, Algeria joined the consensus, hoping that the sponsors will next year return to a text more in keeping with the concerns of our Committee: "disarmament and international security". The elements contained in the two paragraphs I have mentioned should be introduced in other bodies, where my delegation would be happy to support them.

My delegation therefore joined the consensus in a spirit of cooperation with the Chair and in view of the very brief time left before the end of our work. If a vote had been requested, my delegation would have abstained on the eleventh preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 8. Though supporting the consensus, my delegation would, in conclusion, like to make it clear that we dissociate ourselves totally from those two paragraphs.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): It is the wish of the sponsors that this draft resolution be adopted without a vote. I see no objection.

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.4/Rev.1 was adopted.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): Does any delegation wish to explain its position?

Mr. Pham Quang Vinh (Viet Nam): My delegation supports the main thrust and objective of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.4/Rev.1, which has just been adopted. We therefore joined the consensus.

We support the efforts of the countries of the region concerned to enhance peace and security and advance the cause of disarmament there, in accordance with the region's specific characteristics. In this endeavour, we also share in the conviction of the importance and effectiveness of confidence-building measures taken by all States concerned, as such measures will contribute to regional stability and international security. The role of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in

Central Africa has been highlighted in the draft resolution, and we support that.

While supporting the draft resolution in general, my delegation wishes to express some reservations on the last preambular paragraph and on operative paragraph 8, which refer to the proposed establishment of a subregional centre for human rights and democracy. This is a new element which did not appear in the draft resolutions of previous years. As a matter of principle, we believe that this issue does not lie within the purview of the First Committee, and thus the adoption of this draft resolution should not create a precedent for the Committee to deal with such measures, which are outside the framework of its responsibilities. We therefore dissociate ourselves from those two paragraphs.

Finally, my delegation wishes to emphasize again our support for the efforts of the countries of the subregion to promote peace, security and stability in the region, which results from our solidarity with the countries of Central Africa.

Mr. Benítez Verson (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Cuba joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.4/Rev.1, because we think it appropriate to make a clear show of support for the activities of the Standing Advisory Committee of the United Nations on Security Questions in Central Africa.

At the same time, my delegation would like to place on record its reservations with regard to the eleventh preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 8. Our reservations have less to do with their substance than with our opinion that they are completely out of context in this draft resolution. Though we have no doubt regarding the good intentions that led the sponsors to insist on retaining these two paragraphs, Cuba feels that the subjects they cover are dealt with in other Committees, and it is there that delegations should state their views on these subjects.

Organization of work

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): As no other delegation wishes to explain its position, we have exhausted the list of draft resolutions on which to take a decision this morning. This afternoon we will take up draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, which belongs to cluster 1, nuclear weapons.

As Chairman, I would like to propose that general statements on this cluster be limited to one per delegation, and that those general statements be no longer than three minutes.

Is there any objection?

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I understand that general statements on the various clusters are made at almost every meeting of this Committee, and at no previous meeting has there been any desire to limit the number of statements or the time allotted to delegations for statements. I wonder, therefore, Mr. Chairman, why you would wish to limit the number of statements at the next meeting.

Is this a general restriction, relating to all draft resolutions, or is it in connection with any one particular draft resolution or subject that such a restriction is being imposed on delegations? I would like to be clear about that before we take a decision.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): My proposal relates to the discussion on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. Is there any objection?

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): First of all, we have not yet agreed when we will take up draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. We were supposed to take it up this morning, but were unable to do so because of procedural complications which you and I are both aware of, Mr. Chairman. Those procedural complications have been resolved only to a certain extent. Some procedural problems remain, and therefore I do not know whether my delegation will be in a position to take up draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 this afternoon. I think we should first of all decide which draft resolutions we will take up this afternoon, before we move to procedures for restricting the debate on this item.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): The representative of Pakistan is calling into question the taking up of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 this afternoon. As Chairman, I consider his statement to be a motion of no action, and I shall put it to the vote.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Since this Committee first began taking action on draft resolutions, it has been the right of any delegation to ask for the postponement of consideration of a draft resolution to a later meeting. Why are you now interpreting my request as a motion of no action, Mr. Chairman? That is not a fair ruling.

I am not asking for no action. I am just asking that until we have resolved the procedural problems of which you and I and many other members of this Committee are well aware, and which we discussed in private, my delegation would reserve the right to ask for a postponement of action on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 from this afternoon to a later meeting. That is all I am asking. It is not a no-action motion. Please do not misunderstand or misinterpret me.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I thank the representative of Pakistan for his clarification.

Under the circumstances, I propose to suspend this meeting and hold a meeting on procedural questions with interested delegations now in the small room at the back of this room.

Mr. Abou-Hadid (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): What is happening, Mr. Chairman? We came here to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, but we understand and take into account the position of the Chairman and the Bureau and therefore decided to take action in the afternoon.

At the beginning, Mr. Chairman, you proposed taking action on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 at this afternoon's meeting. You then began to go into the procedure and to limit the time for comments on the draft resolution. The sponsors had asked that no amendments be submitted to it. We are now surprised to see that you are imposing limits on the number and length of statements. First, we all know that the First Committee, not the Chairman or the Bureau, is its own master. Secondly, you, Mr. Chairman, had proposed that the Committee consider the draft resolution this afternoon.

The Ambassador of Pakistan has raised a point worthy of discussion. I am sure that the Bureau and the Office of Legal Affairs can give you appropriate legal advice on that point, Sir. Are we going to consider A/C.1/53/L.22 without time limits? This is a matter under consideration. Any State has the right to speak at any time it wants. We are not explaining the vote. Our understanding of the rules of procedure is that they do not limit the length of statements or the number of speakers.

Moreover, the Bureau's subjecting the Committee to limitations or restrictions is quite unacceptable.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I would like to recall that my proposal was just that — a proposal. The Chairman is entitled to make proposals by virtue of rule 106 [35] of the rules of procedure. My proposal had to do only with general statements on cluster 1, nuclear weapons. It had nothing to do with the right of reply, as provided for in the rules of procedure.

Mr. De Icaza (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I think we are confusing two different things. One is the question of when draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 will be taken up. Another, quite different, question has to do with the procedure to be followed in considering it. Let us take each question in turn.

We were convened this morning to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. A request was made to postpone consideration until this afternoon. The Committee agreed to take up the draft resolution this afternoon, so that decision has already been made.

There is not much time left to us. The consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 and its amendments, beginning this afternoon, will involve lengthy procedures that may take a meeting or two. We have no more meetings scheduled. If when we convene this afternoon there is a proposal to postpone consideration of the draft resolution, the Committee will have to take a decision on that proposal then. We do not have to take that decision now. If the Committee decides to take action on the draft resolution this afternoon, then that is what we will do. The Chairman can then propose limits on the number of speakers and the time granted to them under rule 72 [114] of the rules of procedure. Those are both decisions that we will take this afternoon.

I think the best thing to do now would be to adjourn this meeting.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I would like to recall that when I made the proposal to limit the number of speakers and the time allotted for statements, I felt — and I believe that the entire Bureau agreed — that it was not necessary to call into question the consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. It was only later that consideration of the draft resolution this afternoon was called into question. So it was in good faith and on the understanding shared by all delegations that I made that proposal, in order to spare us a procedural discussion at the beginning of the afternoon.

We will now hold the procedural meeting that I announced and see whether the delegations that called into question the consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 this afternoon can be satisfied and have their questions resolved.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation also shares in the surprise at hearing that there is to be a meeting confined to delegations concerned about the question. It seems to me that the small room adjoining this conference room is too small to hold all the delegations interested in this draft resolution; in my view, there are 185 delegations interested in it.

This is an important draft resolution. I understand that consultations have already taken place between several interested delegations and the Chairman, but that they did not have satisfactory results. I believe that — for the future and because of the importance of such a draft resolution — if procedural questions arise and the opinions of States must be sought, there is a basis for not limiting consultations to a number of interested delegations. And even if all interested delegations were asked to participate in the consultations, it would be physically impossible, due to the narrow and cramped nature of the room. If consultations are to be held on procedural matters, it seems to me that this conference room itself is the most appropriate place, so that all delegations may put forward their views, or at least know what is to happen this afternoon, and not be taken by surprise.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I just want to make a couple of points. I think that perhaps most delegations are aware, Mr. Chairman, that you had made an effort to try to reach a pre-agreement on the methods by which we would take action on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 and the amendments. That effort did not succeed, because there were differences of opinion and interpretation among the delegations concerned. We had agreed that we would hold further consultations before we prescribed the procedures for the consideration of that draft resolution.

My delegation therefore was surprised that a part of the procedure should be prescribed without the consultations we expected would be held this morning, and it is for that reason that we have raised an objection. I believe that it may be the best thing to hold those consultations first, to agree on the ground rules and make sure that those ground rules are fair to everyone concerned, and thereafter to proceed to action. But we cannot now say that we will prescribe only part of the procedure and leave the rest of it to be debated in the Committee.

That is my approach. I believe that if it is your desire, Mr. Chairman, to try to reach agreement on the process by which we will take action, certainly my delegation is willing, as we always have been, to participate in that process and to reach a fair agreement. But we do not want to be surprised with procedural manoeuvres which are designed to deny us our rights.

Mr. Aamiry (Jordan): My intervention is to seek clarification, Mr. Chairman. I understood that if a delegation wished to postpone action on a draft resolution, it could ask you. You made it clear that you would like it if they could ask you this in advance — if possible 48 or 24 hours in advance — but that if on the spur of the moment they wished to ask for a postponement, they could. You accommodated this request previously. My understanding is that when we come to this afternoon's meeting, it will still be the right of any delegation to ask for postponement of action on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. Is this correct?

The Chairman: My answer is yes, but I appeal strongly to all delegations, in the interest of us all, not to do so. I respect the rules of procedure, but there is also a question of efficiency and courtesy vis-à-vis all the other delegations.

The meeting was suspended at 11.35 a.m. and resumed at 12.50 p.m.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): As I said during the informal meeting, I will now ask the Committee to take a decision on my proposal to limit general statements to one statement per delegation and to five minutes per statement. Are there any objections?

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): This applies only to general statements, and general statements this afternoon, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): There being no objection, it is so decided.

That being the case, we will meet again at 3 p.m. today to consider draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. Are there any objections?

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I have no objection, Mr. Chairman. I would only note that we have not yet agreed on the process by which we will take up draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. I believe we should have a clear idea how we will take it up, and I would hope that perhaps at the beginning of our meeting this afternoon you, Mr.

Chairman, would be in a position to tell us how, following the general statements, we will proceed to consider draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 — that is, the statements, the introduction of the amendments, explanations of vote and the vote itself. We would expect that you would outline that procedure for us so that we might proceed in an orderly fashion.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): The procedure I foresee is that there would be general statements. Then we would consider the various amendments in chronological order, the order in which they were submitted.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): My understanding is that, as we discussed in the informal meeting, we would first have general statements on the nuclear cluster, then general statements on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, the introduction of amendments and responses to them. That would be followed by action on the amendments, whatever that action may be, and then action on the draft resolution.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I have no problem at all with that view. I would like only to add that at this time I am only familiar with the written amendments before the First Committee. Of course, other amendments are always possible, and they will be considered

(*spoke in English*)

in due time.

(*spoke in French*)

On that basis, is the Committee prepared to reconvene at 3 p.m. to consider draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, "Nuclear testing"? There being no objection, it is so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

United Nations A/C.1/53/PV.29

General Assembly
Fifty-third

Official Records

First Committee
29th Meeting
Thursday, 12 November 1998, 3 p.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Mernier . . . . (Belgium)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda items 63 to 80 (*continued*)

Action on all draft resolutions submitted under all items

The Chairman: As was decided this morning, members now have the opportunity to make general statements on cluster 1, which includes draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. This afternoon we will consider A/C.1/53/L.22 and all the amendments to it.

Does any delegation wish to make a general statement on cluster 1?

Mr. Pearson (New Zealand): On behalf of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, I wish to comment briefly on that draft resolution, "Nuclear testing".

The objectives of the draft resolution are straightforward. Concerns surrounding nuclear-weapon tests in South Asia this year are of fundamental importance to the Committee. The tests were pernicious — no matter the justifications presented. They were conducted in defiance of an international norm opposed to nuclear testing. They will have a negative effect on future non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament endeavours.

We believe it is therefore appropriate and necessary that the Committee should address the issue. Throughout the year individual countries and many regional and political forums have spoken out against the tests. It is finally appropriate that this Committee of the General Assembly address this specific issue during the fifty-third session.

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 speaks directly to nuclear-weapon tests in South Asia in May, to the international community's reaction — no more, no less. It deplores strongly the tests conducted in South Asia. It does not name the countries concerned. It does acknowledge prospective progress subsequently, including recent declarations made by the States concerned. It calls for commitments to be expressed in a legal form through signature and ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). In the view of the sponsors, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 is thus focused, credible and balanced. It does not establish new benchmarks. It is not discriminatory, based on earlier decisions taken by the Committee. It reflects the appropriate reaction of the international community to the testing that took place in May.

We are all aware that a small number of delegations would like to see draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 disappear. Some of those Member States have mounted a strong challenge to the First Committee's ability to take action on the draft resolution, proferring a raft of disparate amendments to the text. In our opinion, and in this particular context, these amendments ultimately divert focus away from the tests themselves. They raise issues dealt with fully in the other 20 nuclear draft resolutions also before the Committee. They serve to broaden and even destroy the simple, straightforward purpose of the draft resolution, whose purpose and message is, in itself, so important that it should not, and must not, be diluted or embellished.

We consider it is fundamental at this point in time that the international community have the opportunity to address

This record contains the original texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

the clear issue contained in the draft resolution. Most critically, the proposed amendments would deny us the opportunity to express our views on this issue.

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 is the product of broad consultation by its sponsors. We understand from continuing consultations that it enjoys wide support across regional groups. In our considered view, it would be a serious mistake to revisit the text of the draft resolution. The most effective approach, we believe, is for the Committee to consider the draft resolution as it stands, without considering amendments. The sponsors will be calling for "no action" on each "L" document containing amendments. By supporting "no action" the Committee has a clear opportunity to protect the central message in the draft resolution and provide itself with the ability to take action on the draft resolution itself.

The sponsors renew the hope that draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 will receive the widest possible support in the Committee, and that efforts to amend it will be opposed vigorously.

Mr. Izquierdo (Ecuador) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: My delegation wishes to speak with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, entitled "Nuclear testing", and the package of amendments to it.

Ecuador decided to join in sponsoring the draft resolution because of our unequivocal, firm position of rejecting nuclear tests. None of us, no matter where we come from, have ever been selective regarding regions or countries. My country reacted immediately by deploring tests which took place in the past, and it did so again regarding the more recent tests, because they came after the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to which 187 States are party, and when the negotiations on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty had concluded and it had already been signed by 150 countries. As a party to these international instruments, Ecuador expressed itself accordingly.

In addition to its individual statements, Ecuador subscribed to the declarations on nuclear testing adopted this year by, among others, the Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of American States and the Rio Group. Our support for the draft resolution reflects exactly the positions adopted in those declarations.

My delegation would like to be perfectly clear. Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 refers to a specific subject. Therefore, we do not believe it would be wise to alter its essence with amendments which, on the one hand, refer to a variety of subjects and, on the other, would limit the scope of the draft resolution by seeking to change its purpose.

The subjects dealt with in the proposed amendments are important; my country would have no problem supporting many of them. In addition, they encompass principles that Ecuador has always defended. However, regrettably, we cannot support their adoption in this context, because they deal with matters far beyond the objective of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. Furthermore, we believe that the texts of the amendments are already contained in other draft resolutions that have come before the First Committee.

Let me now make a brief marginal comment. It seems to my delegation that multilateral confrontation, which has been hinted at on occasion, has nothing to do with the matter under consideration. As far as my country is concerned, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 refers exclusively to the recent nuclear tests, and therefore has nothing to do with the friendly relations of cooperation and solidarity which Ecuador maintains with the countries of South Asia, whose social and economic ideals it shares. Nuclear aspirations are certainly not part of that common agenda.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I would like to take this opportunity to respond to the statement by the representative of New Zealand and to take up a few of his assertions.

A central contradiction in the position of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 and in their statements is that whereas the draft resolution is entitled "Nuclear testing" its contents are directed only at the nuclear tests conducted in South Asia. My delegation has stated before, and I repeat, that if it was the intention of the sponsors and other delegations to deal with the tests in South Asia and their implications, then they should have introduced a draft resolution which dealt with the nuclear and security aspects of the situation in South Asia. The First Committee could then have dealt with that situation in all its aspects and ramifications. I say this because nuclear tests do not arise out of a vacuum; they are a response to a security environment. The implications of the nuclear tests go far beyond a morality play on non-proliferation to questions of security, the political issues involved in South Asia and nuclear disarmament.

The sponsors of the draft resolution cannot, therefore, focus the draft resolution on nuclear testing and then limit it to South Asia. They have to do one or the other. If they wish to focus the draft resolution on what its title says — "Nuclear testing" — then they must refer to all nuclear testing. That testing has not taken place only in South Asia. I will share with my colleague from New Zealand — although I am sure I do not need to — the pamphlets issued by various non-governmental organizations describing the subcritical tests that have been conducted and those that are planned, as well as the fusion research and other laboratory simulation exercises that are going on, which are all classified as "nuclear testing".

Why does draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 not refer to these nuclear tests, which are designed to achieve the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons? Is it because those tests are conducted by nuclear-weapon States? Is it because they are conducted by the allies of some of the principal sponsors of this draft resolution? Is it because they are conducted by people of the same race? What is the reason why those tests are not mentioned in draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 and why is it that the sponsors refuse to even entertain any amendments, modifications or reasonable adjustments to their text to make it more balanced and more consistent with the realities of life?

We of course respect New Zealand, because it is a country which has, as I said the other day, the courage of its convictions. It does not receive nuclear-armed ships in its ports, and that is a position of consistency. But, by the same token, I would say to my colleague from New Zealand that — with regard to the tests that took place in the Pacific in 1995 — Mururoa is much closer to New Zealand than South Asia is. Why was Mururoa not mentioned in 1995? Why was the South Pacific not mentioned? Is it not closer to New Zealand than South Asia? In this case New Zealand has co-sponsored a draft resolution that refers to South Asia, which is at a considerable distance from New Zealand.

We do not understand this kind of double standard. We would appeal to fair-minded people, like the delegation of New Zealand, to consider removing the discrimination in this draft resolution and support at least some of the amendments which seek to make it fair and equitable.

Mr. Cho (Republic of Korea): My delegation associates itself fully with the statement made by the representative of New Zealand on behalf of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, on nuclear testing. As one of the sponsors, we join him in appealing to the members of the First Committee to adopt draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 as it stands by an overwhelming majority.

As the Government of a country that has avowed a denuclearization policy voluntarily and unequivocally, my Government has attached particular importance to the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, and we have actively joined international efforts towards the strengthening of that regime.

In our view, the nuclear tests in South Asia last May dealt a serious blow to the recent progress in the development of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime through the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). These tests seriously undermine the credibility and integrity of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime.

As we have indicated on many occasions, including my Foreign Minister's statement during the general debate of the General Assembly, we deeply regret these nuclear tests. We hope that the States concerned will desist from further nuclear testing, as they have indicated already, and accede to the NPT and the CTBT, which we believe are the main pillars of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

In this regard, we believe that it is imperative that this Committee, and indeed the General Assembly, as a global institution representing the whole international community, should, by adopting draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 without amendment, send a clear and firm message that such challenges as posed by these nuclear tests cannot be condoned.

My delegation is convinced that draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 is well crafted to reaffirm the international community's resolve towards the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, and we believe that this draft resolution reflects a focused approach aimed at specifically addressing the dangerous ramifications of the nuclear testing in South Asia.

Lastly, my delegation would like also to underline that those addressed in this draft resolution might not be limited to the States concerned in South Asia but would be extended to other potential nuclear aspirants. Any misstep in this endeavour could send the wrong signal to those aspirants. We earnestly hope that draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 will be adopted with overwhelming support without any amendments.

Mrs. Kunadi (India): My delegation has requested the floor to present its position with regard to the draft resolution entitled "Nuclear testing", contained in document A/C.1/53/L.22.

Following the tests in May, my Government announced a voluntary moratorium on nuclear tests. The Prime Minister of India, speaking before the General Assembly on 24 September, stated that India was willing to move towards a de jure formalization of this obligation. In announcing a moratorium, India has already accepted the basic obligation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

We have taken note of the statement just made by the Ambassador of New Zealand on behalf of the co-sponsors. We believe that the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.22 is coercive and attempts to pressure my country to deflect it from the direction towards which India has already declared its intention to move.

India has done everything possible to reconcile its own security needs with the general wish of the international community to see an end to nuclear testing. The way forward should be to work together. Recriminations or attempts to isolate any countries, such as through this draft resolution, do not help.

Its title notwithstanding, the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.22 does not address the broad issues of nuclear testing but focuses only on the tests conducted in May this year. We may recall that since the dawn of the nuclear age there have been more than 2,000 nuclear tests. This is the first time that this Committee has been asked to approve a draft resolution which is discriminatory in its approach. Its objective is not to treat all relevant aspects of nuclear testing but to isolate the two countries — India and Pakistan.

While the draft does not address nuclear testing as a whole, it attempts to go far beyond the subject by drawing in references to Security Council resolution 1172 (1998), which addressed issues that had nothing to do with nuclear tests. Besides, Security Council resolution 1172 (1998) was tendentious in its intentions and discriminatory in its perspective and, contrary to the provisions of the Charter, was adopted without giving India an opportunity to participate in the Council's discussions.

India has raised a number of queries regarding this resolution which remain unanswered to this day. In an effort to bring the text of the draft resolution into line with the generally accepted principles on nuclear testing that the General Assembly has on previous occasions adopted — including in resolution 50/70 A on nuclear testing, adopted in 1995 — we have proposed amendments which have been tabled as "L" documents. These amendments attempt to bring balance to an otherwise discriminatory and self-serving draft resolution. We have been told that no amendments were proposed in 1995, but then no amendments were probably necessary, as there were consultations among concerned delegations. The co-sponsors of this draft resolution have made no attempt to seek the views of the parties affected most by this draft resolution. We feel that it has been presented to this Committee on a take-it-or-leave-it basis, in much the same manner as Security Council resolution 1172 (1998).

We are not the only country to have proposed amendments. So too have other countries, including members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Pakistan, Zimbabwe, Nigeria and Zambia. We believe that these amendments deserve to be seriously considered and that the General Assembly, through the First Committee, of course, must be given an opportunity to discuss and evaluate the amendments.

We also believe that A/C.1/53/L.22 does not go far enough in making explicit and direct the relationship between the cessation of nuclear testing and nuclear disarmament. The negotiations on the CTBT began in 1993 with the mandate that such a treaty would contribute effectively to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects, to the process of nuclear disarmament and therefore to the enhancement of international peace and security.

India participated actively in these negotiations and sought to place the Treaty in a disarmament framework by proposing its linkage with a time-bound programme for the universal elimination of all nuclear weapons. This Committee is aware that India's proposals were not accepted, including by the delegations which have sponsored this draft resolution.

The draft resolution refers to alarm expressed internationally, regionally and nationally at recent nuclear tests. Several countries, spread across the political and geographical spectrum, have expressed understanding of the circumstances and context of the nuclear tests. Distinguished institutions and individuals, several of them from the countries which have co-sponsored this draft resolution, have seen the recent events as a wake-up call for nuclear disarmament. The Durban Summit of heads of

State or Government of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement noted the complexities arising from the nuclear tests in South Asia, which underline the need to work even harder to achieve global disarmament objectives, including the elimination of nuclear weapons.

A letter from the sponsors of this draft resolution made available to delegations today does not mention the Non-Aligned Movement Durban Declaration nor the position taken by the SAARC Summit in Colombo, or other meetings which adopted a more balanced approach. Since this draft resolution refers to nuclear testing, we believe that it should express concern at reports of continuing qualitative development of nuclear weapons by certain nuclear-weapon States, in contravention of the purposes and objectives of the CTBT.

Concerns regarding qualitative development of nuclear weapons have been widely shared, even by the European Parliament. If we are to talk of norms, then the norm of the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons exists in the United Nations Charter and in international humanitarian law, and is also contained in the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the use of nuclear weapons. Some of the sponsors of this draft resolution are themselves beneficiaries of alliances or security arrangements. Of these, two are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), whose strategic doctrine continues to be predicated not only on the possession, but also on the first use, of nuclear weapons. A third sponsor is a member of another security arrangement, under which it enjoys the protection of a nuclear umbrella. It is quite extraordinary that countries that continue to predicate their security on nuclear weapons as completely as those countries do should propose a draft resolution in the Committee seeking to criticize nuclear tests carried out by other countries. Double standards are much in evidence.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to state clearly that a draft resolution on nuclear testing that is discriminatory and moulded in a coercive manner will be counter-productive and inevitably impact negatively on the forthcoming disarmament agenda. We trust that the large majority of delegations will resist discriminatory and coercive approaches and lend their support to those amendments that bring fairness, balance and perspective to this draft resolution.

Mr. De Icaza (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation has very carefully studied draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, which proposes that the General Assembly express its grave concern over and strongly deplore the recent nuclear tests conducted in South Asia. We have studied equally carefully the proposed amendments.

Mexico's opposition to all testing of nuclear weapons has been constant and invariable. We believe that the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects is indispensable if we are to achieve a world free of these potentially catastrophic weapons.

In May this year the Government of Mexico condemned and deplored the nuclear-weapon tests conducted at that time, saying that

> "nuclear testing undermines and endangers the international non-proliferation regime regarding these weapons, which is indispensable to world peace and security, since the risk of their being used increases in direct proportion to their propagation, accumulation and technological development."

In the same statement, Mexico appealed to all States to immediately halt all aspects of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to initiate urgent negotiations on an unequivocal, binding commitment to completely eliminate nuclear weapons.

My delegation believes that the General Assembly, as it has done in past years when other States have carried out tests involving nuclear explosions, must take a stand on the tests conducted in South Asia last May, and it must recognize the serious concern and disapproval expressed by the majority of the international community at the international, regional and national levels. That is why my delegation supports draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22.

As regards the proposed amendments, my delegation will vote against those that undermine the purpose of the draft resolution, which is simply to deplore the nuclear tests conducted in May this year.

In keeping with our well-known position and with the contents of my Government's communiqués last May, my delegation will vote in favour of those amendments that, without undermining the purposes of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, appeal for the cessation of nuclear-weapons proliferation in all its aspects and for the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Furthermore, we have learned that certain procedural motions may be put forward with the goal of avoiding consideration of amendments to draft resolution

A/C.1/53/L.22. If this is so, the delegation of Mexico will vote in favour of motions to take no action on those amendments whose objective it is to undermine the specific purpose of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 — namely, those amendments designed to exclude or dilute the expression of the international community's concern regarding the nuclear tests conducted in South Asia.

We will abstain on no-action motions with regard to amendments that, without undermining the direct purpose of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, seek to include in the draft resolution the need to halt all nuclear tests or to make progress in the nuclear disarmament process. This is because, although we agree with the contents of these amendments, and if they are put to a vote we will vote in favour of them, these matters are already dealt with in other draft resolutions on which the General Assembly will take action.

Mr. Hayashi (Japan): The basic position of Japan on the issue of nuclear weapons has already been expressed in my statement during the general debate and also in my explanations of vote on several draft resolutions. Therefore, it is already well known to the members of the First Committee, and I will not repeat it.

On this occasion I would like to explain Japan's position on nuclear testing. Japan has opposed all nuclear test explosions, and it has made this position very clear whenever such explosions have taken place. As for the nuclear tests conducted in South Asia in May this year, Japan immediately issued a statement strongly deploring them, because Japan considers that no nuclear tests should be conducted and because those tests constituted a challenge to the international community's nuclear non-proliferation efforts. Japan indeed took these tests very seriously and acted accordingly.

Japan is of the view that the First Committee, which deals with security and disarmament issues, is simply being legitimate and logical in trying to express, by means of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, its view on the nuclear tests in question. The draft resolution focuses on the nuclear tests conducted in South Asia in May this year, and it does so rightly because those tests are particularly relevant to the work of the First Committee this year and because other draft resolutions focusing on other nuclear-disarmament and non-proliferation issues are being put forward.

Japan therefore strongly supports draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 as it is. Japan believes that it contains the message that the First Committee should send to the world this year.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Let me take this opportunity, as we are ending the debate on cluster 1, to say a few words about the draft resolution in document A/C.1/53/L.22 and the issue of nuclear tests which have been conducted in South Asia and elsewhere this year.

Canada and some other delegations —

The Chairman: My understanding was that this morning we had an agreement that there would be only one general statement per delegation. That was the decision of the Committee, as far as I know.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Earlier I had sent a colleague to the Secretary of the Committee to say that I would like to speak in exercise of the right of reply to respond to the delegation of New Zealand. I was given the floor, and I responded to the delegation of New Zealand. That was in exercise of my right of reply. This is my statement. I did not read my statement.

The Chairman: Mr. Ambassador, when you made your statement, you did not qualify it as a right of reply — at least, not to me.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I specifically stated — as the record will show — that I had asked for the floor to respond to my colleague, the Ambassador of New Zealand.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I give the floor to the representative of Pakistan to make his general statement. However, I would remind him that rights of reply are exercised at the end of the day.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): If that is so, I would have been grateful to be advised by the secretariat that I should exercise that right at the end of the day, but I think that I should not have to pay the consequences for confusion elsewhere.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): All members of the Committee, including the representative of Pakistan, have been informed that rights of reply are exercised at the end of the day.

In any event, I give the representative of Pakistan the floor to make his general statement.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I am most grateful to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the secretariat.

Canada and some other delegations have submitted a draft resolution on nuclear testing contained in document A/C.1/53/L.22. Pakistan considers that draft resolution to be discriminatory and unfair, and we believe that the consequences of the debate on it will be entirely contrary to the high objectives which have been enumerated by its principal sponsors.

Pakistan has explained its position regarding the nuclear tests which we were compelled to conduct on 28 and 30 May 1998, in response to the tests which were conducted on 11 and 13 May.

The following facts should be borne in mind by all those who seek to pass judgement on our tests. First, we acted in self-defence under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter to avert the danger of the possible use of force and in the face of overt threats.

Secondly, Pakistan did not violate any international law or treaty. We are not a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), nor have we signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We did not sign the CTBT precisely because we feared that there would be tests in our region. Immediately after the tests we initiated moves to preserve regional stability and to prevent the proliferation impact of the Indo-Pakistani tests.

Pakistan has been responsive to the concerns of the international community. We have declared a moratorium. We have agreed to the commencement of fissile material negotiations in Geneva. We have affirmed our policy of not exporting sensitive technologies, and we have proposed a strategic restraint regime in South Asia. We have entered into a dialogue with one major Power, and we have commenced a dialogue with our neighbour, India, on peace and security.

The draft resolution is backward-looking. It does not take into account the positive developments to which I have referred which have taken place since May in South Asia. It does not take into account the important statement made by my Prime Minister in the General Assembly. And, what is more, such reference as is made to that move denigrates it, in operative paragraph 2.

The draft resolution will strengthen the endeavours of some nuclear-weapon States to focus attention only on non-proliferation issues and divert attention from the greater threat which is posed by the possession of nuclear weapons by these States, and by the doctrine that would enable them to use such nuclear weapons. Any pronouncement on South Asian nuclear testing must be accompanied by a call for nuclear disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons immediately or within a specified period of time. Any resolution adopted by the General Assembly on South Asian testing should be balanced, non-discriminatory, constructive and forward-looking.

In the context of the South Asian tests, the non-aligned countries were able to achieve a consensus at the Durban Summit. The Non-Aligned Movement summit, *inter alia*, expressed opposition to unilateral, coercive and discriminatory measures taken by some major Powers in the name of averting the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The non-aligned countries also called for nuclear disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified period of time.

The amendments put forward by my delegation, and by some other delegations, are designed to introduce balance into the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.22. We are most concerned that this draft resolution refers to the coercive and unilateral Security Council resolution 1172 (1998). It does not mention the subcritical and laboratory tests being conducted by some nuclear-weapon States. It does not call for nuclear disarmament, which is the objective of ending nuclear testing.

The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 have declared their unwillingness to consider any amendment to it. They have also indicated their intention to propose no-action motions. This is an unusual procedure for the First Committee. It reflects inflexibility — indeed, arrogance. We appeal for these no-action motions to be strongly opposed.

We call for support for the amendment submitted by Sri Lanka, on behalf of States members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), contained in document A/C.1/53/L.52, which would delete reference to the unilateral and coercive Security Council resolution 1172 (1998) and refer instead to all previous United Nations resolutions on nuclear testing. It would also deplore all nuclear tests, whatever their purpose, not only the South Asian tests.

The amendment proposed by Pakistan in document A/C.1/53/L.56 would strongly deplore nuclear testing and experiments for the qualitative development of nuclear weapons and call for the immediate withdrawal of all unilateral, coercive and discriminatory measures, in accordance with the language of the Durban communiqué.

The amendment submitted jointly by Pakistan and India in document A/C.1/53/L.61 would welcome the moratoria on further testing and the statements of their Prime Ministers in the General Assembly relating to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The amendment would also call on all States, not only Pakistan and India, listed in annex 2 of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to become parties to the Treaty —

The Chairman: Mr. Ambassador, you have one minute left.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): The amendment proposed by Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe in document A/C.1/53/L.62 would seek to add a new paragraph urging the five nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their commitments relating to nuclear disarmament under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), with the ultimate objective of eliminating those weapons. This language, I believe, was also approved by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference in October 1998 on a similar Western resolution dealing with nuclear testing.

In conclusion, my delegation would urge all fair-minded delegations, including those of our friends who have chosen to sponsor the draft resolution, to support the proposed amendments. Their concern about nuclear testing is understandable, but their concern for equity and fair-mindedness should also be evident in their positions, as expressed in this Committee.

The Chairman: I have to draw the attention of the representative of Pakistan to the fact that he has already exercised his right of reply once. He knows the rules about rights of reply.

I call on the representative of Pakistan on a point of order.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I would like the Legal Counsel or whoever is here to advise on how many rights of reply a delegation may exercise, because I understand that a statement in exercise of the right of reply can be made against any individual statement that is addressed to a particular country. Therefore, if some other delegation should refer to my country, I would have the right to reply once again. I would like clarification of this rule.

The Chairman: At the end of the day.

I call on the representative of Canada.

Mr. Moher (Canada): I have just two or three very quick points.

First, we exercised forbearance and did not ask to speak on a point of order because we did not want to interrupt our colleague from Pakistan. I said this morning that Canada would not engage in polemics on and around this draft resolution and we will maintain that position. I do wish, however, to make it categorically clear to every delegation and individual present that my country and my Government do not act on the basis of racism.

With regard to procedure, may I ask you, Mr. Chairman, to ensure that we all understand what your position is and that that position will be enforced. Various techniques — we all know this — can be used to circumvent the recommendation that you put before us this morning: multiple introductions of amendments, rights of reply and points of order. We all know the games that can be played. I would like very much to make sure that we understand the rules that you, Sir, wish us to abide by. We, for one, will certainly abide fully by your ruling.

The Chairman: I shall call on those remaining speakers wishing to make general statements and then I will answer the question put by the representative of Canada.

Mr. Felicio (Brazil): I will make a very brief statement. I asked for the floor to announce that Brazil will vote in favour of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.22, entitled "Nuclear testing", as proposed by the sponsors.

As for the proposed amendments, my delegation will abstain in the voting on all of them, although we share many of the principles expressed therein. These amendments, if adopted, would change the main focus of the draft resolution. Moreover, we are of the view that most of the proposals reflected in the amendments are already covered by other draft resolutions that we support.

Mr. Fruchtbaum (Solomon Islands): I take the floor on a point of personal privilege, if you will allow it, Sir.

In his most recent comments, the representative of Pakistan referred to the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, among which the Solomon Islands is proud to be included, as showing arrogance. Hence we are arrogant, I take that to mean. Frankly, I resent that remark. Earlier this afternoon, he was less than kind to you, Sir, and this morning, on two separate occasions, he was insulting to the representative of Canada. We have a long and difficult procedure ahead of us, and I humbly request that the representative of Pakistan please not engage in that kind of remark.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I wish to recall that rights of reply should be exercised at the end of the day.

I call on the representative of Pakistan on a point of order.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I would like to inquire from you, Sir, and from the secretariat as to the nature of the two interventions we have just heard. Were these points of order, rights of reply, or what?

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I believe that the representative of Pakistan himself exercised his right of reply at a moment that was not entirely appropriate. I should like this kind of discussion to cease.

Does any other delegation wish to make a general statement?

Mrs. Castro de Barish (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to make a comment on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, on nuclear testing.

Whenever this matter has arisen in this Committee over the years, we have always been openly and resolutely opposed to all nuclear testing, wherever it may have taken place. We believe that draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 pursues a clear objective regarding nuclear testing in South Asia. The text should be maintained as a whole and should not be undermined by amendments. True, some of these amendments contain important elements, but, as has already been mentioned, those elements have been adopted in other contexts.

As a member-elect of the Security Council, my delegation supports Security Council resolution 1172 (1998), adopted unanimously on 6 June 1998. It refers to the problem we are addressing here. My delegation therefore sincerely hopes that the text of the draft resolution will be maintained in the form in which it was submitted.

Mr. Grey (United States of America): My delegation supports draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 as tabled and without amendments. In our view, the draft resolution merits the full support of us all. It is simple, straightforward, non-confrontational and forward-looking.

The draft resolution is simple because it focuses on one issue: nuclear testing in South Asia. Twenty other draft resolutions before this Committee address the range of other nuclear issues. It is straightforward because it addresses a deep-seated worldwide shared concern. It is not confrontational because it does not single out for criticism any specific country by name, nor does it make any demands.

The text does not fail to take developments since August 1998 into account. In operative paragraph 2, the draft resolution takes note of the testing moratoria declared by the States concerned as well as their willingness to enter into legal commitments not to conduct any further tests. It is also forward-looking in that it calls for the States concerned to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, a Treaty that 151 States have signed and 21 have ratified.

My delegation will support no-action motions on all amendments and should these fail we will oppose on principle all amendments, whatever their content. The aim of the amendments is transparent: to kill the draft resolution by converting it into something else and by causing a new debate over the scope of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty or by equating the nuclear tests in South Asia with previous tests over the years. These amendments would transform this draft resolution into one essentially similar to several other draft resolutions already adopted.

The First Committee is the one forum on arms control and disarmament in which almost all of the nations of the world are represented. We should stand together against efforts to frustrate the clear desire of the international community to express intense concern about nuclear testing in South Asia. That is the point of the draft resolution, and the First Committee should not allow itself to be distracted by attempts to evade it.

Mr. Kunda (Zambia): Before we broke off this morning we had decided that there should be general statements on cluster 1, followed by general statements on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, and that there would be introductions of the various amendments. Are we to have the introductions before the general statements on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22?

The Chairman: This morning we decided that we would have general statements in general, not qualifying them as relating to the cluster or to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, as there is only this draft resolution in this cluster before the Committee today. Then we decided that there would be an opportunity for those who have proposed amendments to introduce them. Then we would consider the amendments in the chronological order of their presentation to the Committee.

Mr. Kunda (Zambia): I wish to speak on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.22, entitled "Nuclear testing", as representative of a delegation that has, together with the delegations of Nigeria and Zimbabwe, put forward an amendment. That amendment, contained in document A/C.1/53/L.62, proposes a new operative paragraph 4, which reads:

> "*Urges* the five nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their commitments relating to nuclear disarmament under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to intensify their efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate objective of eliminating those weapons in accordance with that article."

My delegation subscribes to this amendment in the belief that it would enrich the draft resolution by lending it some balance. We also believe that nuclear-weapon testing is the engine that feeds qualitative nuclear-weapon development, and that the five nuclear-weapon States that have conducted more than 2,000 nuclear-weapon tests since the dawn of the nuclear age ought to be urged to fulfil their obligations relative to nuclear disarmament under article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The language is from an International Atomic Energy Agency document, and therefore we did not foresee any problem for the sponsors in embracing this straightforward amendment. Regrettably, they have served notice that they will not entertain any amendment. The reasons they advance for not accepting amendments include their wanting the draft resolution to remain focused. But this focus is not on nuclear-weapon testing, in our view. Rather, it is on the two countries of South Asia — India and Pakistan — that conducted nuclear-weapon tests last May. This focus is discriminatory. If the draft resolution has to focus on nuclear testing, it should also address nuclear tests through computer simulations which are being conducted by some nuclear-weapon States now.

The sponsors also argue that although article VI of the NPT has been referred to in a number of other draft resolutions already, it should not be mentioned in draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. We felt that since reference to article VI of the NPT has appeared in other draft resolutions, and to our knowledge has encountered no rejection, that is all the more reason why it should be embraced in draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 as well.

As one of the sponsors of the amendment, my delegation is disappointed that it is rejected. In these circumstances, my delegation will find it extremely difficult to support the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.22.

Having said that, let me hasten to point out that Zambia fully supports the total ban on all nuclear-weapon testing in all environments by any country or group of countries. It is in this spirit that my country subscribed to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty when it was adopted by the General Assembly a few years ago. My delegation at that time regretted the fact that the CTBT was not so comprehensive because it did not cover all environments, including computers.

Mrs. Martinic (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation would like to make the following statement with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, entitled "Nuclear testing".

The amendments presented are far removed from the objective of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 — to express concern over and deplore the recent nuclear tests in South Asia — because they deal with more general matters connected with the achievement of nuclear disarmament.

Although the goal of nuclear disarmament is legitimate, it is dealt with in other draft resolutions on that specific subject presented during this session. Regardless of the merits of the amendments in another context, their incorporation in draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 would undermine the nature of the draft. Therefore, the delegation of Argentina will vote against these amendments.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation would like to explain its position on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, entitled "Nuclear testing".

Algeria attaches great importance to nuclear disarmament, which must remain the absolute priority of the international community in the area of disarmament. That is why we have shared our concern about all nuclear testing, including the recent tests in South Asia, which no argument, including nuclear deterrence, can justify. The possession of nuclear weapons, as well as their simulation in laboratories, must be banned in order to achieve collective security.

Having said that, my delegation cannot support draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, for the following reasons. First, its reference to Security Council resolution 1172 (1998), adopted on 6 June, condemning the nuclear tests in South Asia, does not seem to us to be appropriate. Secondly, the geographical reference to the South Asia region also seems inappropriate. Finally, the moratorium declared by India and Pakistan, as well as their intention to join the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty should, from our point of view, be encouraged and supported.

My delegation would have had no problem over supporting a text whose language was identical to that of resolution 50/70 A, adopted by the General Assembly in 1995. Up to the last moment, my delegation, which supported the intensive consultations held in the last few days between several delegations interested in this question to reach wording acceptable to all, had hoped that those consultations would be successful.

For all those reasons, my delegation cannot support draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, nor can it, on principle, support any no-action motion, which we consider undemocratic. On the other hand, depending on the results of the no-action motion, we will consider supporting the amendments according to their individual merits.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): As no other delegation wishes to make a general statement, we will move to the second phase of our proceedings: the introduction of amendments. I would ask those who have submitted amendments to introduce them in the order of submission.

I call first on Sri Lanka.

Mr. Bjarme (Sri Lanka): The amendment in document A/C.1/53/L.52, proposed by Sri Lanka on behalf of the seven member countries of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation, was introduced by Sri Lanka's Ambassador during a previous meeting of the Committee. We do not intend to speak to the amendment once again, as it has been put before the Committee.

The Chairman: The next amendment has been introduced by India. Does India wish to speak to it again?

Mrs. Kunadi (India): India has indeed introduced amendments, and these are contained in documents A/C.1/53/L.55, L.57 and L.58. I would like to have the opportunity to take the floor when they are taken up for a decision.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I would like the representative of India to speak to the amendment now, before we conclude this stage of our consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. When we enter the decision-making process, there will be opportunities for statements in explanation of vote both before and after the vote, as usual.

Mrs. Kunadi (India): The amendment proposed by India in document A/C.1/53/L.55 relates to the first preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, which we would like to be modified to read:

> "*Reaffirming* that the cessation of all nuclear testing will contribute to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects, to the process of nuclear disarmament leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified framework of time and therefore to the further enhancement of international peace and security".

India has already stood for nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified framework of time. This is a principle which has been accepted by the Non-Aligned Movement and in the proposals which India along with a group of countries, the Group of 21, has submitted to the Conference on Disarmament. We would hope and expect that this amendment proposed by India would receive the Committee's support.

Our next amendment is in document A/C.1/53/L.57. Here we have proposed that the second preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 should read as follows:

> "*Also reaffirming* its commitment to the crucial importance of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to international efforts to halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons through nuclear testing".

The third set of amendments proposed by India is contained in document A/C.1/53/L.58. We suggest that the existing formulation in paragraph 2,

> "reiterates the need for such legal commitments to be expressed in legal form by signing and ratifying the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty"

should be replaced by

> "calls upon all States that have not yet done so to become parties to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty so as to facilitate its entry into force by September 1999".

The Chairman: The next amendments, to be introduced by the Ambassador of Pakistan, are in document A/C.1/53/L.56.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): The amendments contained in document A/C.1/53/L.56 address two issues in the context of nuclear testing which are omitted from draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. The first important omission from that draft resolution, which is entitled "Nuclear testing", is that it does not in any way express concern about the nuclear testing and experiments which are taking place for the qualitative development of nuclear weapons by certain nuclear-weapon States, contrary to the objectives of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

In this context, I should like to draw the Committee's attention to a study entitled "Dangerous Thermonuclear Quest". It is about the fusion research planned for a $2.2 billion facility which would help scientists design new nuclear weapons and which could lead to the development of pure fusion weapons. The authors of this study, Arjun Makhijani and Hisham Zerriffi, say that the development of new nuclear designs is contrary to the purposes of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which, as the preamble states, include

> "constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the development of ... new types of nuclear weapons".

The authors state that experiments at the National Ignition Facility will include minute thermonuclear explosions. The CTBT prohibits all nuclear explosions, no matter how small.

There is another report, which refers to the exercise called "Bagpipe", under which one nuclear-weapon State has conducted subcritical testing.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): The representative of Pakistan is introducing an amendment. I must ask him not to take this opportunity to make a general statement.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I kindly request you, Sir, to allow me the opportunity at least to explain the amendment. My amendment relates to testing in the laboratory. I am trying to apprise the membership of the Committee of the fact that such testing is taking place, which explains the nature of the amendment contained in A/C.1/53/L.56. I know it must be annoying to you, Sir, because you have a very difficult task ahead of you. But please be fair and allow us to explain our point of view.

The Chairman: I am fair; try to be brief.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): To sum up, I would draw the attention of members to those studies. I have excerpts with me; I can share them with any delegations that are interested in objectivity and the facts. That is why we believe that the draft resolution must also refer to such testing, and not only to the South Asian nuclear test explosions.

Furthermore, certain States have been subjected to unilateral, coercive and discriminatory measures in the promotion of the objectives of non-testing and non-proliferation. The Final Document of the Non-Aligned Movement summit meeting in Durban states that the heads of State or Government

> "also stressed their positions against unilateral, coercive or discriminatory measures which have been applied against Non-Aligned countries."

This amendment seeks to reflect that position of the non-aligned countries, and we urge that the amendment be supported by the largest possible majority of countries in this Committee.

The Chairman: Pakistan and India have also submitted the amendments in document A/C.1/53/L.61. I give the floor to the representative of Pakistan to introduce the amendments.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): On behalf of the delegation of India and of my own delegation, I would like to introduce the amendments contained in document A/C.1/53/L.61, which deal with paragraph 2 of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.22.

Paragraph 2 of the draft resolution notes the moratoria that have been declared by India and Pakistan and then goes on to urge them to adhere to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). It is our view that the draft resolution should at least reflect what has been stated in the General Assembly and in the First Committee by many delegations, which is that many delegations have welcomed the moratoria that have been declared on further testing by the States in South Asia. Moreover, many statements have noted with appreciation or have welcomed the statements relating to the CTBT made by the Prime Ministers of Pakistan and India in the General Assembly. The first amendment would seek to reflect that factual situation in paragraph 2 of the draft resolution.

Furthermore, we do not see why paragraph 2 should ask only the States concerned — the States in South Asia — to ratify or adhere to the CTBT. The CTBT would come into force if all 44 States listed in annex 2 of the Treaty ratified the Treaty. In any draft resolution it would be unfair and discriminatory to ask only two States to do so. Therefore, the second amendment in document A/C.1/53/L.61 calls on all States that have not done so, specially those listed in annex 2 of the CTBT, to become parties to the Treaty. We believe that both the amendments are not only factual but fair, and we seek the support of the Committee for their adoption.

The Chairman: The last amendment to the draft resolution is in document A/C.1/53/L.62. I give the floor to the representative of Zimbabwe to introduce the amendment.

Mr. Mapuranga (Zimbabwe): I have the honour to introduce the amendment in document A/C.1/53/L.62, which

> "*Urges* the five nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their commitments relating to nuclear disarmament under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to intensify their efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate objective of eliminating those weapons in accordance with that article."

It is evident that my delegation does not support the no-action motion of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. On the contrary, Zimbabwe has co-sponsored the amendment in document A/C.1/53/L.62, one of the amendments to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to explain why we feel that the inclusion of this amendment, sponsored by Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe, would lend weight and meaning to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, on nuclear testing, under consideration today.

May I proceed with my explanation, Sir? I ask because when the leader of the Pakistani delegation made a statement to introduce one of the amendments there was confusion as to whether he was making a general statement or introducing the amendment.

The Chairman: We are now in the phase of introducing draft resolutions and amendments. The phase of general statements is past.

Mr. Mapuranga (Zimbabwe): I shall now proceed to explain the reason for the draft amendment.

Let me state from the outset that Zimbabwe, a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), is committed to the goal of global nuclear disarmament and, like the rest of the international community, is opposed to nuclear testing, whether for the acquisition of nuclear weapons or for their qualitative improvement.

Nuclear testing and nuclear disarmament are interrelated and inseparable issues. The non-existence of nuclear testing cannot be an end in itself. It should be a step towards nuclear disarmament. Some nuclear-weapon States recognize this, and in this connection I wish to quote from a statement by His Excellency Mr. Lin Changhe, Ambassador for Disarmament Affairs of the People's Republic of China, at the fifth meeting of the First Committee, on 14 October.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I would ask the representative of Zimbabwe to end his statement with the introduction of the amendment; it is my opinion that he has gone beyond the introduction of the amendment to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22.

Mr. Mapuranga (Zimbabwe): On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I do not accept that I have gone beyond introducing the amendment. First, I have stated that I wish to explain the rationale behind the amendment. Secondly, I happen to know that when a Member State is speaking on behalf of other Member States it is usually allotted more time than normal.

The Chairman: Please finish your statement as soon as possible.

Mr. Mapuranga (Zimbabwe): China is one of the five permanent members of the Security Council and one of the nuclear Powers. Mr. Li Changhe stated:

> "The complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons is the common aspiration of mankind. We fully understand the wish of the large number of non-nuclear-weapon States for general and complete nuclear disarmament and their concern over the slow pace of this process. The indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) does not imply that the nuclear-weapon States can possess nuclear weapons for ever. The nuclear-weapon States should intensify their efforts to fulfil the obligations set forth in article VI of the NPT." (*A/C.1/53/PV.5, p. 63*)

Therefore, it is the considered view of my delegation that the recent nuclear tests conducted in South Asia, which my country deplored, are the result of the existence of a nuclear club of States bent on preserving their nuclear monopoly while pontificating to the other States of the world that they should not acquire the same weaponry. My delegation does not believe that a group of nuclear-weapon States should claim the moral high ground, claiming that those weapons are in safe and civilized hands while the rest of the world cannot be trusted with them.

My country acceded to the NPT and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) on the understanding that, and in the hope that, these two Treaties were not an end in themselves but part of a process leading towards total nuclear disarmament. This is why my country is co-sponsoring an amendment to reflect the nuclear disarmament goal enshrined in article VI of the NPT.

The 113-member Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, when it met at Cartagena and at Durban, condemned nuclear testing but proceeded to stress the need for nuclear disarmament. The Non-Aligned Movement position is also the African position — that an end to nuclear testing must lead to nuclear disarmament.

I had intended to read out another quotation, but since I see that there is growing impatience, I will not do so. I was going to quote the Canberra Commission, a highly esteemed and respected body, which stated —

The Chairman: Canberra is quite far away from the amendment.

Mr. Mapuranga (Zimbabwe): The Canberra Commission said, in the Statement section of its report:

> "Nuclear weapons are held by a handful of states which insist that these weapons provide unique security benefits, and yet reserve uniquely to themselves the right to own them. This situation is highly discriminatory and thus unstable; it cannot be sustained. The possession of nuclear weapons by any state is a constant stimulus to other states to acquire them."

Hence we condemn all forms of nuclear testing and urge all States to refrain from nuclear testing.

I shall not at this stage quote the delegation of the United States. I refer here to Ambassador Holum, who stated — and I quote —

The Chairman: Mr. Ambassador, you have largely passed the five minutes of a general statement, so I ask you to spare us a quotation from Ambassador Holum.

Mr. Mapuranga (Zimbabwe): I would just say that the quotation from the Ambassador of the United States was exactly in the same vein as that from the representative of China. If the United States, a nuclear-weapon State, like China, is committed to fulfilling its obligations under article VI of the NPT, why would the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 — namely, Australia, Canada and New Zealand, non-nuclear-weapon States themselves — oppose the inclusion of the amendment proposed by Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe?

The Chairman: Thirty seconds.

Mr. Mapuranga (Zimbabwe): In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, these are the reasons why we do not support the no-action motion with respect to this draft, and why Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe are sponsoring the amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.62 to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, the amendment which I have had the honour to introduce.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): All the proposed amendments to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 have now been introduced. We will take them up in the order I proposed this morning, that is, the order in which they were introduced.

We begin with amendment A/C.1/53/L.52, "Sri Lanka: amendment to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22".

Mr. Zimonyi (Hungary): My delegation wishes to move a motion of no action on the proposed amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.52. As one of the sponsors, we attach great importance to preserving the integrity of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 and keeping its focus on the subject matter it intends to address.

The Chairman: We are now in a procedure in which two countries may speak in favour of that motion and two against.

Mr. Bjarme (Sri Lanka): As the country which introduced the amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.52, on behalf of the States members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), we wish to register our position on the no-action motion with regard to this amendment.

When the amendment was introduced, we had in mind making draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 more balanced and equitable and acceptable to all countries. We believe that this draft resolution on the subject of nuclear testing starts off well by condemning all nuclear tests, but somewhere in the middle it takes a turn in the wrong direction and becomes specific, by referring to the nuclear tests in South Asia.

We believe that this is not the stage or the occasion to make condemnations or to deplore what took place some months ago. There was an occasion when many countries, including my own, expressed concern over developments that had taken place in our region. Since then there have been improvements, and several developments have taken place. We believe that a draft resolution of this nature will not help the countries of the region to make progress towards nuclear disarmament, especially with the undertakings given on moratoria on further testing and on the two countries concerned joining in the nuclear fissile material cut-off treaty negotiations.

It was with this in mind that Sri Lanka, after consulting with the seven countries of the region, decided that we should make the draft resolution more acceptable by confining it to the objectives concerning nuclear testing and preventing it from moving in a direction that is condemnatory of some actions taking place in the region. We believe that if the draft resolution is to be one of condemnation it should also refer to events that took place even earlier for it to be fair.

The proposed amendments are simple. One is an amendment to the fifth preambular paragraph, recalling all United Nations resolutions on the subject. We believe that singling out one Security Council resolution is not proper, because there have been many resolutions adopted by United Nations bodies, such as the General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament. We also believe that if we are deploring nuclear tests we should deplore all nuclear tests, not only the tests in South Asia. This would give the draft resolution a balanced focus.

It is for these reasons that Sri Lanka introduced the amendments on behalf of the seven countries of the region. We believe that they will make the draft resolution more acceptable to the international community, and we therefore appeal to all countries in the First Committee to vote against the no-action motion in the name of equity, fair play and objectivity.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I would ask delegations to keep to the no-action motion and limit themselves so far as possible to three minutes.

Mr. Pal (India): I have asked for the floor to second the points that have just been very ably made by the representative of Sri Lanka, who opposed Hungary's no-action motion.

In our informal consultations earlier today, we said that we had doubts about the legality of introducing a motion or motions of no action with regard to amendments. Be that as it may, we acknowledge that there is a practice, but what the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 are saying is that they want the Committee to decide on the substance of their draft resolution, but will not permit it to address the substance of any amendments to it. Now, that is not fair and it is not democratic.

As it happens, the three lead sponsors — Australia, Canada and New Zealand — share with India a common parliamentary democratic tradition. All of us got it from the United Kingdom, which preceded us into democracy — and also, of course, into nuclear testing. In other parliamentary practice — and we have this on the highest authority of 18 Indian Members of Parliament who happen to be floating around New York now — it is not the practice to move motions of no action on amendments to a proposal; they can be moved to the entire proposal, but not to amendments. Therefore, what is proposed — certainly by the three lead sponsors — is something that in their own parliamentary practice they would consider undemocratic.

We believe that if indeed the General Assembly, ignoring the precepts of democracy, considers a no-action motion, we should consider when a no-action motion has in practice been permitted to move ahead. It has always been the case that when a draft resolution is put forward that is known to be deeply politically divisive, a motion of no action is proposed so that this political divisiveness is avoided. What we have now is an extraordinary situation in which a deeply divisive, politically motivated draft resolution is submitted and the sponsors are saying, Mr. Chairman, that you should not permit the Committee to take action on any amendment that would reduce the divisiveness and make the draft resolution more balanced. This sets practice, precedent and logic on its head.

It is for this particular reason more than anything else — without addressing myself to the substance — that we would strongly support the Sri Lankan request that the motion of no action be defeated and that the Committee be permitted to pronounce itself democratically on the substance of the Sri Lankan amendment.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I remind speakers that it is within the prerogative of the Chair to request that they limit themselves to three minutes on motions of no action.

Mr. Izquierdo (Ecuador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation would like to express its support for Hungary's motion of no action with regard to the amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.52. This position is supported by the terms of the statement made by my delegation at the beginning of this session. We believe that this amendment would alter the essence of the message clearly contained in draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22.

Mr. Cho (Republic of Korea): My delegation supports the no-action motion of the representative of Hungary on the amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.52.

In our earlier intervention we explained why we support draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 as it stands, without any amendment. Of course, we understand the points raised by our colleague from Sri Lanka when he presented the amendment. We think that if it is put in the context of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, which is before us, it will change the entire spirit and purpose of that draft. This is not acceptable to my delegation.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to the vote on the motion of no action on the draft amendment to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 contained in document A/C.1/53/L.52, as proposed by the representative of Hungary in accordance with rule 116 of the rules of procedure.

Please note carefully that to vote "Yes" means to vote in favour of the no-action motion. To vote "No" means to vote against the no-action motion.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan

Against:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Israel, Panama, Paraguay, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela

The motion of no action on the amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.52 was carried by 63 votes to 60, with 13 abstentions.

The Chairman: We will now take up the next draft amendment, A/C.1/53/L.55, "India: amendment to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22".

Mr. Coelho (Portugal): For the reasons stated in the statement made by New Zealand on behalf of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, I have the honour to present a motion of no action on document A/C.1/53/L.55.

Mrs. Kunadi (India): India — as I had sought the opportunity to convey earlier, Mr. Chairman — will not be seeking action on that draft amendment or the draft amendment submitted by us in document A/C.1/53/L.57.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): The draft amendments in documents A/C.1/53/L.55 and A/C.1/53/L.57 are therefore withdrawn.

We will now take up the draft amendment in document A/C.1/53/L.56, "Pakistan: amendment to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22".

Mr. Pearson (New Zealand): With respect to document A/C.1/53/L.56, which is an amendment to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, I propose, as provided for in rule 116 of our rules of procedure, a motion of no action. I do so because this amendment serves to divert, if not destroy, the straightforward purpose of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22.

Mr. Benítez Verson (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): In the opinion of Cuba, the proposed amendments contained in document A/C.1/53/L.56 are directly related to the essence of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, entitled "Nuclear testing". For that reason, my delegation believes that it is of the utmost importance that all Member States exercise their right to express themselves freely on these proposals.

My delegation strongly objects to the use of procedural manoeuvres, such as the motion of no action that has just been adopted, to prevent delegations from stating their views on very sensitive and substantive issues. For that reason, Cuba will vote against this motion of no action.

Ms. Stener (Norway): My delegation wishes to speak in favour of no action being taken on the amendments to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 contained in document A/C.1/53/L.56.

The decisions of India and Pakistan to carry out underground nuclear tests were taken in clear defiance of international norms and constitute a serious threat to the global nuclear non-proliferation regime as well as to peace and stability in the entire region. It is therefore essential that the international community address the issue raised by these tests in an adequate manner during the current session of the General Assembly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 on nuclear testing is an important one and is framed in a focused, credible and balanced way. We believe that it accurately reflects the response of the international community to the testing that took place earlier this year. We would like to see this draft resolution adopted in its present form, without any amendments that would dilute its original purpose.

We cannot accept any change that would make the resolution less focused on this specific issue or that would obscure its message. We need a draft resolution that is straightforward, concise and unambiguous in this respect. We call on all delegations to support a motion for no action on each "L" document containing amendments.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I would like to second the opposition expressed by the representative of Cuba to the no-action motion proposed by New Zealand on document A/C.1/53/L.56.

As I have already explained, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 should also, apart from expressing its concern about the South Asian testing, since it is entitled "Nuclear testing", express concern about the non-explosive testing that is taking place. That is one of the purposes of document A/C.1/53/L.56.

The second purpose is to call for the withdrawal of coercive and discriminatory measures that are being taken against certain countries. We believe that this is a fair call. We hope that the Committee will be allowed the opportunity to vote on this amendment. We therefore call for opposition to the no-action motion proposed by New Zealand.

Mr. Hoey (Ireland): I wish to second the motion of no action moved by the representative of New Zealand in respect to the amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.56.

As a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, my delegation is opposed to amendments aimed at taking the focus away from its very clear message.

The Chairman: I now give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to vote on the no-action motion proposed by the representative of New Zealand on the amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.56.

A "Yes" vote is a vote in favour of the no-action motion. A "No" vote is a vote against the no-action motion.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan

Against:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Chad, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Turkey, Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Haiti, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Mozambique, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela

The motion of no action on the amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.56 was carried by 62 votes to 51, with 18 abstentions.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): We will now consider the proposed amendment in document A/C.1/53/L.58, "India: amendment to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22".

Mr. Sadauskas (Lithuania): I move that no action be taken on the draft amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.58.

Mr. Tsering (Bhutan): My delegation would like very briefly to state its opposition to this no-action motion. It will vote against it, and appeals to all other delegations to vote against it.

Mr. Campbell (Australia): For the reasons enunciated by my New Zealand colleague earlier in this debate, Australia supports the proposal just made by our colleague from Lithuania that the Committee take no action on document A/C.1/53/L.58.

Mrs. Kunadi (India): My delegation opposes the no-action motion.

Mr. Izquierdo (Ecuador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation would like to express its support for Lithuania's no-action motion.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to vote on the no-action motion proposed by Lithuania on the amendment in document A/C.1/53/L.58.

A "Yes" vote is a vote in favour of the no-action motion. A "No" vote is a vote against the no-action motion.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan

Against:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Chad, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Turkey, Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Haiti, Israel, Jamaica, Mexico, Mozambique, Namibia, Nicaragua, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela

The motion of no action on the amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.58 was carried by 60 votes to 49, with 21 abstentions.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Given the results of the no-action motions on previous amendments, I would not wish to subject the position of my country in the General Assembly to such votes, and therefore, on behalf of India as well as my own delegation, I ask that the amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.61 be withdrawn.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): The proposed amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.61 has been withdrawn.

The Committee will now take up the proposed amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.62, "Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe: amendment to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22".

Mr. Coelho (Portugal): I have the honour to move that, for the reasons given in the statement made by New Zealand on behalf of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, no action be taken on document A/C.1/53/L.62.

Mr. Mapuranga (Zimbabwe): My delegation, along with the other sponsors of document A/C.1/53/L.62, Nigeria and Zambia, will vote against the no-action motion on that document.

My delegation believes that condemning and banning nuclear tests should not be regarded as an end in itself. This view has been articulated clearly by the Organization of African Unity and the Non-Aligned Movement. Our goal should be nuclear disarmament.

I urge the Committee to vote against the no-action motion, and I appeal to those who are habitual abstainers not to abstain this time around, but to vote against the motion.

Mr. Moher (Canada): For the reasons that have been stated frequently here this afternoon, we support the motion of no-action on document A/C.1/53/L.62, and we request the support of all delegations for that purpose.

Mr. Kunda (Zambia): My delegation opposes the no-action motion on document A/C.1/53/L.62 and supports what the Ambassador of Zimbabwe has said. Therefore, my delegation will vote against the motion, as a sponsor of the amendment in document A/C.1/53/L.62.

Ms. Stener (Norway): For the reasons outlined by previous speakers, I support Portugal's no-action motion.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee now will proceed to vote on the no-action motion proposed by the representative of Portugal on the amendment in document A/C.1/53/L.62.

A "Yes" vote means a vote in favour of the no-action motion. A "No" vote means a vote against the no-action motion.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan

Against:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Turkey, Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, France, Haiti, Israel, Mexico, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela

The motion of no action on the amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L/62 was carried by 59 votes to 57, with 17 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of France advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour of the motion.]

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): All the proposed amendments to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 have thus been considered.

We will therefore now proceed to consider draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, entitled

(*spoke in English*)

"Nuclear testing".

(*spoke in French*)

The draft resolution has not been amended.

I first call on those representatives who wish to explain their positions before a decision is taken.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): My delegation deeply regrets that the Committee, through the procedural device of no-action motions, has been prevented from pronouncing itself on the various amendments that have been proposed to the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.22. It is obvious from the votes that have taken place that this is a divisive and controversial draft resolution, which does not enjoy broad consensus support within the international community.

This draft resolution is discriminatory; it is aimed against my country; and it is unfair. For all the reasons which I have already cited, my delegation will vote against it.

Mr. Benítez Verson (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The delegation of Cuba has had several opportunities in the course of our Committee's work to express its views on the draft resolution on which the Committee is about to take a decision. We made statements in the hope that the sponsors would, in the interests of dealing in depth with the subject of nuclear testing, reach agreement on a text reflecting the legitimate concerns that still exist on this subject.

Cuba's position on nuclear testing is well known. We are opposed to all types of nuclear tests, including so-called laboratory tests and subcritical tests, which contribute to the qualitative development of nuclear weapons.

Without prejudice to our substantive position, our Committee has a duty to act consistently as it tackles the various subjects before it. It must not subject its approach to any selectivity depending on which member States happen to be involved. However, the language used in document A/C.1/53/L.22 is far from reflecting this broad, integrated, balanced approach, which we should take on a subject of such sensitivity.

I would like to take this opportunity to explain the position of my country on the no-action motions moved today. Cuba is not in favour of procedural manoeuvres designed to prevent member States from stating their views on substantive issues related to the very essence of the text under consideration.

Regardless of the final position that my delegation might have adopted on specific amendments, the majority of which are aimed at restoring the balance missing in the present text, we believe that what has happened does not contribute to just and effective solutions. That is why Cuba voted against all the no-action motions.

For these reasons, Cuba will abstain in the vote on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.22.

Mrs. Burgois (France) (*interpretation from French*): I should like to clarify a technical point, Mr. Chairman, concerning the voting on the no-action motion on document A/C.1/53/L.62.

If the Committee had not only a legal expert but an expert in magic, I would have asked for the latter's opinion. Failing that, Mr. Chairman, I have to call on your wisdom.

The French delegation voted in favour of the no-action motion. I checked the light on the board, and it was green. Moments later it turned orange. I thought maybe I had become colour blind, and that would not have been surprising, in view of the fatigue brought about by the past few days. But my Austrian colleague also became colour blind —

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): It is an epidemic!

Mrs. Burgois (*interpretation from French*): He too noted that the green light had turned to orange.

In the interests of good order, I shall not try to explain this magical phenomenon, but in the interests of proper recording I repeat that the green button was pressed.

The Chairman (interpretation from French): The statement of the representative of France is noted.

We continue with explanations of vote before the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22.

Mr. Sorreta (Philippines): The Philippines, early on during our work, expressed its strong support for draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 and will now cast a vote in its favour.

However, in voting in favour of the draft resolution unamended, we want to emphasize that the amendments' not being adopted does not diminish the value the Philippines puts on some of them or the high value we place on some of their principles. We hope that the exercise that we have just gone through will truly show that we oppose all forms of nuclear testing. Hopefully, there will be no similar exercise in the future.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): A recorded vote has been requested.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, entitled "Nuclear testing", was introduced by the representative of Canada at the 21st meeting, on 2 November 1998. In addition to the sponsors listed in the draft resolution and in document A/C.1/53/INF/2/Add.3, the draft resolution is sponsored by Uruguay.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela

Against:

Benin, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Algeria, Angola, Bangladesh, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Israel, Kenya, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Maldives, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Qatar, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 was adopted by 98 votes to 6, with 31 abstentions.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Oyugi (Kenya): Kenya abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. In brief, we feel that the draft resolution does not take into account amendment proposals, some of which we consider very pertinent to it. The end result, therefore, is that the draft resolution is not as balanced or as fair as we would have liked it to be.

Kenya believes in equity and fair play. In this regard, it is our view that the singling out of States for mention in resolutions goes against that principle. Kenya therefore abstained, just as it did in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.21, which the Committee considered the other day.

This notwithstanding, Kenya remains committed to the ideals inherent in both the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Mrs. Kunadi (India): The Committee has just taken a vote on the draft resolution on nuclear testing, contained in document A/C.1/53/L.22. We regret the procedural tactics that were used to suppress open debate on substantive issues. The draft resolution, drafted in a coercive and discriminatory manner, will not be helpful to the issues at hand or to the objective of promoting nuclear disarmament.

My delegation rejects the premise as well as the content of this draft resolution. It is selective, discriminatory and coercive, and includes aspects which are not relevant to nuclear testing. Isolating India will not be helpful in the process of interaction that my country has embarked upon.

For these reasons, my delegation voted against the draft resolution as a whole.

Mr. Li Changhe (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): In May this year, in the context of the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and broad consensus in the international community on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, India blatantly conducted nuclear tests. These flagrantly flouted the non-proliferation regime, which enjoys the universal support of the international community, and dealt a major setback to international arms control and disarmament efforts. Hence, they had a negative impact on peace, stability and security in the region and the world at large. Afterwards another South Asian country was compelled to respond and conducted its nuclear tests. The First Committee, as the forum for the consideration of questions related to disarmament and international security, should logically react to those events.

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22 on the whole objectively reflects the views of the international community with regard to the nuclear tests in South Asia. The Chinese delegation voted in favour of it. We also voted in favour of the no-action motions on the amendments, because some of the amendments would fundamentally change the content of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, divert its objective and change its nature. China in essence supports the content of the amendment sponsored by Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Zambia, contained in document A/C.1/53/L.62. However, it should not be added to draft resolution A/C1./53/L.22, because it could be covered or reflected in other relevant draft resolutions.

Mr. Sungar (Turkey): Since the inception of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Turkey has been an ardent supporter of it and its full implementation. We have constantly encouraged all countries to accede to it.

Concerning nuclear tests, Turkey signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) on the day it was opened to signature, and has already submitted it to Parliament for ratification. We hope that the international norm that has been set against nuclear testing will become universal. In a number of statements, Turkey has repeatedly voiced its concern about nuclear tests conducted in various parts of the world. However, we have abstained in the past in the voting on draft resolutions regarding nuclear tests, with a view to giving more vigour to the appeal to nuclear-weapon States to make progress towards ending nuclear tests. Consistent with this policy, Turkey abstained on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. Had the amendments been voted upon, my delegation would also have abstained on all of them.

Mr. Shihab (Maldives): My delegation abstained on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22. The Maldives is firmly opposed to nuclear testing, whatever the time, place or reason. We firmly believe that the principles of non-proliferation, whether vertical or horizontal, must be steadfastly observed. Accordingly, the Maldives fully associates itself with all the relevant provisions of the draft resolution that subscribe to this view. The Maldives also supported previous draft resolutions to come before the Assembly on the issue of nuclear testing. However, my delegation was constrained to abstain in the vote just taken because of the selective, partial and negative direction of certain paragraphs of the draft resolution.

It was for these reasons that my delegation in all sincerity joined its South partners in submitting amendments to the draft resolution to give it a more balanced orientation and to make it consistent with previous practices of the Assembly on nuclear testing. Our abstention should not be construed as condoning nuclear testing in any form, by any party, or for any purpose.

Mr. Rodrigue (Haiti) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, "Nuclear testing", consistent with our position of supporting and encouraging all reasonable initiatives which will help us achieve the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, which constitute the most serious threat to mankind. In the same spirit, we acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and supported its indefinite extension, signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty CTBT) and participated in the movements which led to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legitimacy of the threat or use of nuclear weapons. We welcomed the decision of the Conference on Disarmament to establish an Ad Hoc Committee to negotiate a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

We therefore share the general concern expressed over the tests carried out by India and Pakistan, tests that not only contributed to increasing regional and global tensions but were also a severe blow to the non-proliferation regime which the international community has tried to establish. Haiti noted with interest that the statements made by these two countries indicate their intention not to carry out any further tests and to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. All these elements are reflected in draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22, which the Committee has just adopted. However, my delegation would have preferred it to take into account all types of tests, because, as we are only too well aware, the nuclear-weapon States continue to carry out laboratory tests in order to perfect their existing stocks of nuclear weapons. Such tests should be deplored, for they thwart the objective of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. These concerns were taken into account in some of the amendments which we presented but which unfortunately were not accepted.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): As no other delegation wishes to take the floor, we have concluded our consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.22.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.

United Nations

A/C.1/53/PV.30

General Assembly
Fifty-third

Official Records

First Committee

30th Meeting

Friday, 13 November 1998, 10 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Mernier . . . . (Belgium)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 63 to 80 (*continued*)

Action on all draft resolutions submitted under all items

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): This morning the secretariat has distributed informal paper 9, which lists the draft resolutions to be taken up today.

Does any delegation wish to comment on this list?

Mr. Campbell (Australia): I should like to ask that the first draft resolution on the list, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11, be taken up a little later today. The sponsors still need to talk to the proposers of amendments to see the position with regard to the text.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I hear no objection. Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11 will therefore be taken up later in the day, and, of course, documents A/C.1/53/L.53 and A/C.1/53/L.64 — amendments relating to it — will be taken up later as well.

We will now take up draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2. I call on the representative of India to introduce this revised draft.

Mrs. Kunadi (India): Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16, entitled "Reducing nuclear danger", was introduced by the Indian delegation on 2 November 1998.

We are pleased with the broad range of support that this draft resolution has received from various delegations. My delegation conducted extensive consultations with several interested delegations, especially with regard to the operative paragraphs. Following these consultations, changes were introduced with regard to a new third preambular paragraph, which addresses the issue of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as a new operative paragraph 3, which

> "*Calls upon* all Member States to take the necessary measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects and to promote nuclear disarmament, with the ultimate objective of eliminating nuclear weapons".

With a view to simplifying the text and focusing on the core issues, operative paragraph 2 has also been slightly modified. Since this is the first year that this Committee and perhaps the General Assembly will address this draft resolution, we felt that the inclusion of the old operative paragraph 4 could be deferred to a later stage.

All these changes are reflected in draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2, which is now available to delegations.

The dangerous operational configuration of nuclear weapons, even after the end of the cold war, is a risk to humanity. This draft resolution highlights the problem confronting the international community. We hope that it will receive widespread support.

I request that the decision on this item be slightly deferred, because a number of delegations have yet to arrive. I therefore request that the Chair ask other

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delegations to introduce their draft resolutions and perhaps defer the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2 by 10 or 15 minutes.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): The problem is that I already have two requests to postpone decisions on draft resolutions. So I would have proposed suspending the meeting for 10 minutes, but I see that the representative of Japan is ready to introduce a revised draft resolution.

Mr. Hayashi (Japan): I wish to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, entitled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons", on behalf of the following sponsors: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Romania, Spain and Japan.

Since I introduced the original draft resolution, consultations have been conducted with various interested delegations. The revised draft resolution before the Committee is the outcome of those consultations, and I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the cooperation and flexibility shown by the delegations concerned.

Changes have been made to the second preambular paragraph and to the third and fifth subparagraphs of operative paragraph 4 in order to accommodate comments made by certain delegations. In spite of these changes, the fundamental nature of the draft resolution has not been altered. Its purpose is still to stress the importance of strengthening nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts and to indicate concrete and realistic actions to be pursued with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons.

Since 1994 this purpose has been consistently manifested in the successive draft resolutions on the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, but the purpose is much more keenly felt this year than before because the world witnessed the nuclear test explosions in South Asia in May this year. Consequently, this year's draft resolution is put in the context of the circumstances created by these nuclear tests.

It is the sponsors' wish that the First Committee adopt this draft resolution by an overwhelming majority.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): Since practically all delegations are now present, I suggest that we now proceed to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2, "Reducing nuclear danger".

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2, entitled "Reducing nuclear danger", was introduced by the representative of India at this meeting. The sponsors are listed in the draft resolution and in document A/C.1/53/INF.2.

A separate, recorded vote has been requested on operative paragraph 3.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): We are now proceeding to the voting on operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2, which reads:

(*spoke in English*)

> "*Also calls upon* Member States to take the necessary measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects and to promote nuclear disarmament, with the ultimate objective of eliminating nuclear weapons".

Does any delegation wish to explain its position before we take action on this operative paragraph? As I see none, I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Yemen

Operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2 was retained by 67 votes to none, with 53 abstentions.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): As no delegation wishes to explain its vote, the Committee will now proceed to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2, "Reducing nuclear danger", as a whole.

Does any delegation wish to explain its position before the vote? As I see none, I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Argentina, Armenia, Belarus, China, El Salvador, Guatemala, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, San Marino, Ukraine

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2, as a whole, was adopted by 68 votes to 44, with 12 abstentions.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their vote.

Mr. Li Chonghe (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The Chinese delegation commented on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16, "Reducing nuclear danger", when it was introduced on 2 November.

The Chinese delegation believes that nuclear danger is not limited to nuclear weapons, but also covers such aspects as nuclear proliferation. The third preambular paragraph of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) clearly points out that nuclear proliferation would seriously enhance the danger of nuclear war.

For the draft resolution to reflect the danger of nuclear war in a more balanced and objective manner, and be really conducive to the prevention of that danger, it should be amended to include a call on all countries to accede to the NPT. The Chinese delegation planned to propose amendments to the draft resolution along those lines, conducting consultations with the parties concerned and receiving extensive support. At the same time, we conducted several rounds of consultations with the Indian delegation, which incorporated some of our proposed amendments and made certain improvements to the text. However, taken as a whole, this draft resolution is still far from balanced, and it is not totally satisfactory.

For all those reasons, the Chinese delegation abstained on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2.

Ms. Crittenberger (United States of America): The United States voted "No" on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2, "Reducing nuclear danger", because it is yet another unrealistic nuclear disarmament draft resolution which fails to acknowledge the real progress being made at the unilateral, bilateral and multilateral levels to reduce nuclear dangers.

For the United States, the cold war and the nuclear arms race have been consigned to the ash heap of history. Unilateral and bilateral efforts over the last decade have reduced the size of nuclear arsenals. Globally, there is less possibility of a nuclear exchange involving the five nuclear-weapon States than at any time over the last 50 years. The United States has taken advantage of the new political realities of the post-cold-war world by making deep reductions in its nuclear arsenal and in other ways.

I shall cite only a few successes. The United States has unilaterally reduced its deployed non-strategic nuclear weapons by 80 per cent. Since 1988, the United States has reduced its overall nuclear warhead stockpile by 59 per cent — 80 per cent of the United States non-strategic stockpile and 47 per cent of the strategic stockpile. Once START II has entered into force and has been fully implemented, the United States will have reduced its strategic nuclear forces by two thirds from cold war levels. Since 1988 the United States has dismantled more than 13,300 nuclear warheads and bombs, averaging 100 per month. As of May 1994, no country is targeted on a day-to-day basis by United States strategic forces.

The United States was the first State to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which, when it enters into force, will make a critical contribution to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Finally, the United States long ago ceased the production of plutonium and uranium for weapons purposes. It will continue to work to make this unilateral step a global obligation through the conclusion of the fissile material cut-off treaty negotiations, which resume at the Conference on Disarmament in January 1999.

These United States actions have made a direct contribution to reducing the nuclear threat, and we are firmly convinced that further step-by-step progress will be made.

This impractical proclamation, which uses the same old tired rhetoric, will do nothing to promote nuclear disarmament. The sponsor not only ignores the historic achievements of recent years, but, through its own nuclear testing, may actually have undermined the cause it claims to support.

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2 must be seen for what it is: an attempt to distract international attention from the real cause of increased nuclear danger in the world — the nuclear test explosions which two South Asian States conducted in May 1998.

Mrs. Burgois (France) (*interpretation from French*): The revised draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16 contains a number of elements which are unacceptable to France. It is based on the position of principle that nuclear weapons are in themselves dangerous to international security and contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter.

This is not France's point of view. Nuclear deterrence is an essential element of its defence policy. Furthermore, the draft resolution calls for a review of nuclear doctrines, a prerogative that falls solely under the national sovereignty of the nuclear-weapon States.

With respect to the alert and targeting levels to which the text refers in the context of intermediate measures, France has adjusted to the international context. Thus, in 1992, France reduced the alert level of its nuclear forces and in 1996 eliminated the land component of its nuclear forces and further reduced the alert level of its strategic maritime force. On 26 September 1997, the President of the Republic announced that, with the dismantling of ground-to-ground missiles on the Albion plateau, no nuclear weapon in France's deterrence force was thenceforth targeted.

I will not go into the other elements of the text that we find unacceptable, such as the inappropriate language on nuclear disarmament and the selective reference to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice.

France could only vote against such a text.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): If no other delegation wishes to explain its vote, the Committee will now take up draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1.

An amendment to this draft resolution has been submitted in document A/C.1/53/L.54. I understand that Pakistan, following consultations, may wish to withdraw the amendment.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I should like to make a statement on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1.

The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.42 is entitled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons". As my delegation stated earlier in its comments on that draft resolution, we see it as addressing the problem of nuclear non-proliferation more than it does the problem of nuclear disarmament. The very first operative paragraph of the draft resolution is indicative of the major objective that is being promoted.

We therefore submitted amendments to the draft resolution, not only this year, but also last year, in order to try to redress the imbalance which we see in the draft and to bring it towards contents that truly reflect its title concerning nuclear disarmament.

What we found even more offensive in the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.42 was the reference in the second preambular paragraph to Security Council resolution 1172 (1998) relating to the situation in South Asia. That resolution, as the Committee is by now well aware, is totally rejected by my country and we cannot accept its reflection in any resolution, in particular in any resolution which seeks to deal with nuclear disarmament. We are firmly of the view that the insertion of that reference into this draft resolution was inappropriate, unjust and counterproductive to the purposes of the draft resolution.

My delegation has had extensive consultations with the principal sponsor of this draft resolution, the delegation of Japan, both here and in capitals. We are appreciative of the fact that the Japanese Government and delegation have agreed to the deletion to the reference to Security Council resolution 1172 (1998) from this draft resolution. The replacement paragraph, of course, is something that we also do not endorse, but our objection is not as categorical and total as it is to Security Council resolution 1172 (1998).

In the light of the flexibility displayed by the Japanese delegation and Government with regard to the reference to resolution 1172 (1998), my Government has instructed me, as a gesture of appreciation to the Japanese, not to press the amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.54 to a vote in the Committee.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): The amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.54 having been withdrawn, we shall now take action on the second preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1. The second preambular paragraph reads as follows:

(*spoke in English*)

> "*Bearing in mind* the recent nuclear tests which pose the challenge to international efforts to strengthen the global regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons".

(*spoke in French*)

I call on the representative of Pakistan, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): This preambular paragraph refers to recent nuclear tests. These recent nuclear tests, in our view, include not only the nuclear test explosions conducted in South Asia, but also the laboratory tests and subcritical tests that are being conducted by certain nuclear-weapon States. It is with that interpretation in mind that my delegation will be able to abstain rather than vote against this preambular paragraph.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): Does any other delegation wish to speak in explanation of vote before the voting? I see none.

A separate, recorded vote has been requested on the second preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, entitled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons", was introduced by the representative of Japan at this meeting. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in the draft resolution. The following countries have also become sponsors: Australia, Finland and Spain.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Zambia

Against:

India

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Israel, Nigeria, Pakistan

The second preambular paragraph was retained by 125 votes to 1, with 4 abstentions.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I call on the representative of Mexico for an explanation of vote.

Mr. De Icaza (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation voted in favour of this preambular paragraph in its Spanish version, which speaks of the recent nuclear tests which pose "a" challenge to international efforts to strengthen the global regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The English version unfortunately says something different; it says that the tests pose "the" challenge, as if there were no other challenges. My delegation believes there are a number of challenges to the non-proliferation regime, including the impasse in the multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament. If we had had to vote on the English version, we would have abstained, but my delegation had an obligation to vote on the text in its own language, and the text in Spanish is correct.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): No other delegation wishes to speak at this stage.

(*spoke in English*)

We shall therefore now proceed to take action on operative paragraph 1, which reads:

> "*Reaffirms* the importance of achieving the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and calls upon States not parties to the Treaty to accede to it without delay and without conditions".

(*spoke in French*)

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): I would like to announce that Portugal has become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I call on the representative of Pakistan for an explanation of position before a decision is taken on operative paragraph 1.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Operative paragraph 1 is totally unacceptable to my delegation. As is well known, the subcontinent of South Asia has already been nuclearized. One State has declared itself a nuclear-weapon State and another has demonstrated that it has the capability to explode nuclear weapons and manufacture them. In the circumstances, for the General Assembly to call for universal acceptance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) by these countries is totally unrealistic. It is especially unrealistic and unacceptable that this demand should be made in this draft resolution, which deals with nuclear disarmament, ignoring at the outset that there are 30,000 nuclear weapons on red alert in the hands of the nuclear-weapon States, posing the primary danger of nuclear war and nuclear devastation to the world.

The call in the first operative paragraph for accession to the NPT betrays the fact that the true objective of this draft resolution, as of many other initiatives in the Committee, is to promote non-proliferation and not nuclear disarmament. Under the circumstances, my delegation will have no hesitation in voting against this operative paragraph.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): As no other delegation wishes to speak, I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to vote on operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

India, Israel, Pakistan

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Syrian Arab Republic

Paragraph 1 was retained by 136 votes to 3, with 4 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Chairman: As no delegation wishes to explain its vote, we shall now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1 as a whole. I shall first call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mrs. Burgois (France) (*interpretation from French*): In English, the last two words of the fifth subparagraph of the draft resolution are "their negotiations". The French translation is *la négociation*, but it should read *leurs négociations*, in the plural, and it is on that basis that we shall vote.

Mr. Abou-Hadid (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation voted in favour of retaining operative paragraph 1, pressing the green button, but suddenly the light changed colour. I should be grateful if this malfunctioning of the machine could be rectified.

Mr. Shin (Republic of Korea): My delegation wishes to explain its position before the voting on draft resolution

A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, entitled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons".

My Government has supported a practical and incremental approach to nuclear disarmament. While upholding the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, my delegation considers it important for the international community to proceed to that ultimate goal step by step on the basis of consensus and consensus-building. We are well aware that there is no quantum leap in disarmament, including nuclear disarmament. We believe that draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1 reflects, in a balanced way, the international community's impending tasks on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, taking into account developments since the nuclear testing in South Asia.

My delegation attaches importance to the need to reinforce multilateral discussions of possible future steps on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. We consider that as the final guardian of nuclear disarmament the international community should vitalize the discussion on how to proceed to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. We also believe that further efforts by the five nuclear-weapon States to reduce their nuclear arsenals unilaterally or through negotiations among them should be accelerated so as to make full use of the favourable strategic environment created by the end of the cold war.

For these reasons, we will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, and hope that it will be adopted with overwhelming support.

Mr. Benítez Verson (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Once again this year my delegation will abstain in the vote on the draft resolution entitled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons", contained in document A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, because we believe that it does not succeed in establishing a minimal, universally acceptable basis for the path towards nuclear disarmament.

As we have said on many occasions since this text was introduced, in spite of its title it does not deal with matters related to nuclear disarmament but emphasizes selective issues and approaches having to do with horizontal nuclear proliferation. Therefore, if the amendments contained in document A/C.1/53/L.54 had been voted upon, Cuba would have voted in favour of them.

Partial approaches to the problem in no way help create the conditions necessary to advance towards the objective of nuclear disarmament. On the contrary, they are a perfect pretext for those who continue to advocate their obsolete nuclear military doctrines. We hope that this year's experience will be duly taken into account at the next session, and that in 1999 we will adopt a text on this subject that will truly meet the expectations of the international community.

Mr. Ri (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): As in previous years, my delegation will abstain on the draft resolution. Japan, as a victim of atomic bombs, should have pursued a policy of nuclear disarmament, in particular the total elimination of nuclear weapons. However, it continues to put itself under the protection of nuclear weapons and to allow nuclear bases on its territory, thus acknowledging the possible use of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, it hastens its pace towards nuclear armaments. The draft resolution, though titled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons", lacks crucial elements for nuclear disarmament, in particular the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It simply advances the idea of non-proliferation, which is regarded by many delegations as being discriminatory. The draft resolution does not serve the ultimate goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It is for these reasons that my delegation will abstain.

Mr. Salazar (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Colombia considers that draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1 refers more to non-proliferation measures than to nuclear disarmament measures. Although my delegation does not disagree with its contents, it will abstain, since the Committee is considering other draft resolutions which refer directly to nuclear disarmament.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): As there are no further speakers in explanation of vote before the voting, I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1 as a whole.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Central

African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:
None

Abstaining:
Algeria, Bhutan, Colombia, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Myanmar, Pakistan

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, as a whole, was adopted by 132 votes to none, with 11 abstentions.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Li Changhe (China): China's position on nuclear disarmament is known to all. The delegation of China is in favour of the main thrust of the draft resolution contained in A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1 and we therefore voted in favour of it. However, we have different views on some of the wording in the operative part of the draft resolution. China takes the consistent view that the countries with the largest and most sophisticated nuclear arsenals bear special responsibility for nuclear disarmament. They should implement as soon as possible existing nuclear disarmament agreements and on that basis further reduce their nuclear arsenals by a large margin. That would not only have a positive impact on international peace and security, but create favourable conditions for other nuclear-weapon countries to participate in the process of negotiations on nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, renouncing first-use of nuclear weapons and nuclear-deterrence strategies are also important aspects of promoting nuclear disarmament. None of those points is reflected in the draft resolution.

Mr. Grey (United States of America): My delegation is pleased to have been able to support A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons". This is an important draft resolution. There are already more than enough draft resolutions before the First Committee that permit delegations to take a Utopian position on nuclear disarmament. By contrast, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1 offers a more realistic vision in terms both of what has been accomplished to date and of the difficult task that lies ahead.

The United States is firmly committed to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, but remains convinced that this can only be accomplished through a step-by-step process that takes political and international realities fully into account. The next multilateral step in that process is to negotiate a fissile material cut-off treaty. Consensus to start negotiations was not easily re-established, but we have at last begun initial work in the Conference on Disarmament. We look forward to beginning the hard work of serious negotiation early next year. We also look forward to further progress on nuclear disarmament on a bilateral and unilateral basis.

My delegation takes note of the call in paragraph 4 for multilateral discussions on possible future steps in nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, to which we look forward in the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference.

Mrs. Bourgois (France) (*interpretation from French*): France is pleased to have been able to vote again this year, as it did on similar draft resolutions in 1997, 1996 and 1995, in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, introduced by Japan, "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons". My country fully endorses this text, which reflects our position on and our commitment to non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

However, we regret the absence, for the first time, of any reference to unilateral efforts. This seems to reflect a failure to comprehend the scope and ambition of the measures announced by head of State of France in 1996. The disappearance of the land component of the nuclear force, the closure and dismantling of the nuclear research centre in Mururoa and the closure and dismantling of factories producing fissile materials for nuclear-weapon use are major decisions on the path towards the implementation of our commitments under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Their implementation requires considerable financial means and complex technical measures, which are being pursued over several years. The centre in Mururoa is closed and will be dismantled at the end of 1998. Dismantling of the ground-to-ground missiles on the Albion plateau and of the Hades missiles finished this year. Operations to close definitively the two fissile material installations, Pierrelatte and Marcoule, operations that are lengthy and costly, but irreversible, have begun.

The lack of any reference to that disarmament programme, which is being relentlessly pursued, seems to result from ignorance of the facts. It is true that we are living in a world in which the present reigns supreme and one piece of news quickly replaces another. But those of us who work in the long term cannot bow to the rules that govern the world of the media. Why disregard an effort whose announcement, it is true, was made two years ago, but whose implementation will of necessity take several years? If we are seeking new facts, why forget that the closing of Mururoa will have taken place by the end of this year and ignore the fact that France will be the only country with such facilities to get rid of them?

Another element in the draft resolution introduced by Japan requires clarification by my country. Paragraph 4 refers to "efforts by the five nuclear-weapon States to reduce their nuclear arsenals unilaterally and through their negotiations". France recognizes the magnitude of the efforts made by the States with the largest nuclear arsenals, and we welcome them, as proved by our support for the bilateral draft resolution. However, we note that the course taken by those two States is specific — on the one hand, because of the very large numbers involved, despite the importance of their commitments to reductions, and, on the other, because of the technical choices made, which in particular have so far excluded the dismantling of nuclear warheads. Finally, START II has not yet been ratified, and consequently the timetable for implementing the reductions decided upon is uncertain. In other words, as far as France is concerned, the reference to negotiations contained in the fifth subparagraph of paragraph 4 has to do with the process going on between the United States of America and Russia. My country reserves the right to assess whether and when efforts being made globally to eliminate nuclear weapons justify preferring a course other than the unilateral initiative that we have resolutely undertaken.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation did not vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, for the following reasons. The text overlaps, and is even in several respects at variance with, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.47, which was introduced by the delegation of Myanmar and adopted by the Committee, and which Algeria traditionally supports as a sponsor. The title of this draft does not seem to us to precisely reflect the contents of the document. Some elements are not in line with our view of nuclear disarmament, which accord entirely with the views of the Non-Aligned Movement. The conceptual approach, giving pride of place to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, does not seem to us at the present stage to be the right one. For all those reasons, my delegation was unable to vote in favour of the draft resolution. By voting in favour of the second preambular paragraph, whose French translation does not, unfortunately, reflect the English version, my delegation would include all nuclear tests, of whatever kind.

Mr. Deghani (Iran): My delegation supports the basic thrust of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.24/Rev.1, sponsored by the delegation of Japan. However, we abstained in the voting on it because its substance is not consistent with its title. The draft resolution purports to be a nuclear disarmament initiative, but its elements focus solely on non-proliferation issues. Accordingly, my delegation believes that in its present form it still needs some improvements if it is to be relevant to its title.

The Chairman: As no other delegations wish to speak in explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, the Committee will now consider draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda".

Mr. MacFhionnbhairr (Ireland): I wish to make a statement before the Committee begins to take action on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 and to introduce the text contained in the revised draft.

In their interventions before the Committee, and from the outset, the sponsors of the draft resolution have promoted dialogue with all delegations wishing to contribute to the further elaboration of this text, and they have engaged in a constructive dialogue over the past five weeks with many delegations. This process has resulted in the enrichment of the draft, which is now set down in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

This draft, upon which the Committee is now about to act, does not represent an approach of one delegation. Its sponsors represent the variety of traditions which inform the debate on nuclear disarmament here in the First Committee, at the Conference on Disarmament, in the review process of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and elsewhere.

The sponsors do not expect that they have achieved the definitive determination of the nature or process of nuclear disarmament. The draft proposes an agenda, which is wholly realizable, for which the context and mechanisms are for the most part already to hand, and which can be infinitely developed.

The dialogue which the sponsors have held on this draft resolution — both here and in capitals — has demonstrated that among Governments there is a steady awakening to the fact that now is the time to move forward together to eliminate nuclear weapons.

It has not been easy for the sponsors to develop such a text, and — as the delegations which have engaged with us will testify — the balance we have sought to achieve in our search for a middle ground, drawing together the international community as a whole, has not been easy either. However, the resulting draft laid before delegations for adoption represents a call for action and the parameters for an agenda required to achieve that goal, which we all declare to be ours.

The sponsors recommend the text for adoption by the Committee.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): Separate, recorded votes have been requested on paragraphs 8 and 17 of the draft resolution. Paragraph 8 reads as follows:

(*spoke in English*)

> "*Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to adhere unconditionally and without delay to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to take all the necessary measures which flow from adherence to this instrument".

Does any delegation wish to explain its vote before a decision is taken on paragraph 8?

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): This paragraph in effect repeats the provisions of the first paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1.53/L.42/Rev.1, which we have just adopted.

My delegation has explained that, in the conditions of nuclearization of South Asia, it is unrealistic and unacceptable for the Committee to adopt provisions calling on States to adhere unconditionally to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). My country will not do so, and therefore we cannot accept this call. We will therefore vote against paragraph 8.

Mr. Grey (United States of America): My delegation will not participate in the votes on individual paragraphs of the draft resolution. In our view, the overall thrust of the draft resolution is fundamentally flawed, and thus changing individual paragraphs would not meet our concern.

Mr. Abdullayev (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Russian delegation perceives the draft as a single whole, and therefore we see no purpose in voting on fragments of it, although some of its parts could accord with our national position. For this reason, we shall not participate in the vote on separate paragraphs.

Mrs. Burgois (France) (*interpretation from French*): As I had an opportunity to explain when the draft resolution was introduced, its general inspiration seems to us unsound. For this reason, France will not participate in the separate votes on two paragraphs whose adoption or rejection will not change anything in the general spirit of a text which as a whole is counter-productive.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): We shall now proceed to the vote on operative paragraph 8, the text of which I read out a short while ago.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", was introduced by the representative of Ireland at this meeting. Slovenia has withdrawn its sponsorship of the draft resolution. In addition to the sponsors named in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, an additional sponsor is named in document A/C.1/53/INF/2/Add.3.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

India, Israel, Pakistan

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Slovenia

Operative paragraph 8 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 was retained by 132 votes to 3, with 4 abstentions.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): We shall now take a decision on operative paragraph 17 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, which reads as follows:

> "*Calls for* the conclusion of an internationally legally binding instrument to effectively assure non-nuclear-weapon States Party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons".

I call first on the representative of Pakistan, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): As is well known, my delegation is in favour of the conclusion of effective international instruments to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. However, we believe that any effort to restrict such assurances only to the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is discriminatory and therefore not acceptable. Under the circumstances, my delegation will abstain in the vote on operative paragraph 17.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to the vote on operative paragraph 17 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Abstaining:

Cuba, India, Israel, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Slovenia

Operative paragraph 17 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 was retained by 130 votes to 1, with 6 abstentions.

The Chairman: The Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 as a whole.

I call now on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mrs. Burgois (France) (*interpretation from French*): France will vote against draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda".

During the debate I explained why we view this draft resolution as unrealistic and inappropriate. It is unrealistic because it disregards the facts, especially the considerable bilateral and unilateral efforts made by nuclear-weapon Powers in the context of their commitments under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It is inappropriate because it seeks, by proposing a new conference and a new agenda, to call into question the achievements of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to cast doubt on the strengthened review process, to which we are firmly committed.

Moreover, a future special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament will provide an opportunity for comprehensive consideration of all disarmament issues. France would want the special session to take place in 2001.

To continue the process of nuclear disarmament on the basis of article VI of the NPT requires serious, patient work based on a realistic assessment of the risks and threats we face. In that connection, it is unacceptable to us that the draft resolution calls into question the principle of nuclear deterrence. Deterrence remains the fundamental element of French defence strategy and an assurance against any threat to our vital interests, no matter what its source or form. It is also a fundamental element in the doctrine of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

France is determined to fulfil its commitments under article VI of the NPT: putting an end to the nuclear arms race once and for all, negotiating effective measures of nuclear disarmament and working towards general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. Because of our desire for international peace and security we must omit none of these elements. For the present, a priority goal must be to negotiate a fissile materials cut-off treaty.

For these reasons my delegation will vote against draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, which runs counter to those principles.

Ms. Martinic (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation wishes to comment on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda". Today we see the building of an interdependent world in which the dominant trend is towards integration. Overcoming poverty, economic stagnation; achieving social justice; defending human dignity and the environment; promoting scientific and technical cooperation as a stimulus to development: these are but a few of the problems and goals shared by the entire international community. We must find fair, lasting solutions to these problems.

In this context, Argentina believes that we must try to develop a comprehensive view of international security which includes, among other elements, a decision to deal with the problems of disarmament with determination; the adoption of increased transparency and confidence-building measures; and beginning a multilateral process that will promote international cooperation with renewed dynamism.

With the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba and the Antarctic Treaty, the southern hemisphere has become a nuclear-free zone. Today we view with satisfaction the fact that other regions have also opted for zones free from the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons, which undermines the legitimacy of such weapons. At the same time, countries with nuclear weapons on their territory have either destroyed them or moved them outside their borders. These countries could not support those weapons and showed the way for others in the common search for a world free of weapons of mass destruction.

The United States of America and the Russian Federation, by agreeing on two treaties to reduce and limit strategic offensive weapons, START I and START II, and the United Kingdom unilaterally, are continuing to make efforts in favour of nuclear disarmament. We welcome the progress being made by some of the five nuclear Powers. At the same time, we encourage the nuclear Powers to continue to pursue nuclear disarmament, with a view to completely eliminating this type of weapon. Notwithstanding the positive balance of collective nuclear disarmament and security efforts, the disturbing risk of nuclear proliferation persists.

Therefore, my delegation cannot support draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1. In its current form it would give the impression of acknowledging a new category of States — States that are nuclear-weapons capable. This is unacceptable, because it runs counter to the position that my country has adopted and continues to adhere to in disarmament and non-proliferation forums. Continuing this mistaken approach could create unnecessary problems, especially in the case of those countries that, having acquired the technical capacity, have wisely opted to limit themselves.

For all those reasons, the delegation of Argentina will abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

Mr. Benítez Verson (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Cuba will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, because we consider that, as part of a larger group of actions and initiatives, it can contribute to promoting the priority goal of nuclear disarmament. The mere fact that it advocates a new agenda towards a nuclear-weapon-free world gives it a certain weight, which must be duly taken into account.

At the same time, our appreciation of the value of the text and our positive vote should not be interpreted as automatic approval of all the ideas it contains. As we told the principal sponsors at the appropriate time, some of the explicit or implicit ideas in the draft resolution will require in the future reformulation, at the very least, and some may even have to be eliminated if we truly wish to create an agenda with a solid foundation.

These are some of the reasons why my delegation abstained in the separate votes on operative paragraphs 8 and 17. Our position of principle regarding the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is well known. I therefore need not dwell on that subject, nor on the reasons why we were unable to support the appeal in operative paragraph 8 for the universality of a Treaty which we think is in essence discriminatory and selective.

With regard to operative paragraph 17, Cuba's position is in line with that set forth in the principal documents of the Non-Aligned Movement. Security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons must be universal and unconditional. Cuba therefore cannot agree that they should be restricted to States that are parties to a specific treaty.

Cuba will support every effort to bring about nuclear disarmament. In that context, we will duly take into account the text to be adopted today.

Mr. Grey (United States of America): Since the United States has already spoken at some length on the reasons for its opposition to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48, I will be brief. We have two major concerns. First, this draft resolution calls into question a fundamental doctrine of our defence and that of our allies. Secondly, far from advancing the nuclear disarmament agenda, it will in all probability delay it.

As to the first point, the representative of one of the original sponsors could not have been clearer when, in response to a statement by our British colleague, he said that the draft resolution was intended to call into question the doctrine of deterrence. This doctrine has stood the United States — and, indeed, the world — in good stead for the past half century. It has kept the peace and it ended the cold war. Along with our allies, we reviewed it recently and concluded that it should remain the basis for our defence. I note that Article 51 of the Charter gives us all the right to exercise and take measures for individual and collective self-defence, and I want to make it very clear that my country will continue to exercise this right.

Beyond this, the sponsors of this draft resolution seem to believe that the doctrine of deterrence is a major obstacle to more rapid progress on nuclear disarmament, and, conversely, that if only it were abandoned the nuclear Powers would disarm rapidly. We disagree. Nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament do not exist in a vacuum. The nuclear disarmament process can take place only in the context of national security interests. The dramatic progress we have made to date has been possible because of changes in the international security climate, even as it has contributed to the increased stability and security that make further progress possible.

The United States intends to continue to move towards greater security and stability at lower levels of weapons in a step-by-step process towards the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. But security and stability would be empty concepts without nuclear deterrence. Let me be perfectly clear: no one will make nuclear disarmament occur faster by suggesting that a fundamental basis of our national security for more than 50 years is illegitimate.

As to the second point, we have already noted that — far from a new agenda — this draft resolution contains a mix of items already on the arms control disarmament agenda: proposals of which de-alerting is one which we have already considered and rejected, and suggestions such as a call for a nuclear disarmament conference that will lead nowhere. Indeed, if the purpose of this draft resolution is to speed up the nuclear disarmament process, it can only be counter-productive.

By lecturing the nuclear-weapon States about their inadequacies while neglecting to criticize the actions of States that have recently conducted nuclear-weapons tests and have thereby damaged the global non-proliferation regime, the draft resolution will hardly encourage the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) or START II. Indeed, it will only give aid and comfort to those who are sceptical about multilateral arms control and disarmament in general. By seeming to require a new commitment to nuclear disarmament as a prerequisite to further steps to reduce nuclear weapons, it will only provide an excuse for delay.

Finally, by proclaiming the need for a new agenda and for still another conference on nuclear disarmament, it calls into question the agendas on which the international community already agrees, such as principles and objectives for disarmament and non-proliferation. It also intends to undermine existing forums, such as the Conference on Disarmament, the enhanced Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review process, the First Committee and other United Nations disarmament machinery, including a possible fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We do not understand how this would promote speedier progress on disarmament.

In our view, this draft resolution is still another example of feel-good arms control. The proponents may believe they will accomplish something, but the draft resolution destroys no weapons, prevents no proliferation and makes the world no safer. My delegation hopes that many of our friends and allies will decide they cannot support this unnecessary and potentially harmful draft resolution. The United States, for its part, will continue to pursue meaningful measures to reduce and eliminate weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, as well as preventing the proliferation of such weapons.

Mr. Soutar (United Kingdom): I have asked for the floor to set out the position of my delegation with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda".

The United Kingdom is wholly committed to nuclear disarmament and to our obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This commitment has been restated many times and given practical expression by the measures undertaken in our strategic defence review, which included significant reductions in, and unprecedented transparency about, the British nuclear deterrent, and, for example, by our ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

The 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference agreed principles and objectives setting the next steps towards nuclear disarmament. We do not believe that the sponsors of the draft resolution, all of which are parties to the NPT, are, by setting out a different agenda, making a constructive contribution. The agreed next step is the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty, for which an Ad Hoc Committee has been established in Geneva. We will work hard for the success of these negotiations.

The draft resolution also advocates measures which were examined in our strategic defence review and which we concluded are, at the present time, inconsistent with the maintenance of a credible minimum deterrent. The draft resolution neither condemns nor even mentions the nuclear tests carried out by India and Pakistan. It is difficult to see how it could be reconciled with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1172 (1998) on those tests.

The United Kingdom remains ready to support any measure that will make a practical contribution to advancing nuclear disarmament. This draft resolution does not. We shall accordingly vote against it.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I would like to take this opportunity to explain Pakistan's approach to and position on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

Pakistan strongly supports the objective of nuclear disarmament, and we believe that this draft resolution makes a sincere effort to try to identify the possible elements and approaches that could promote the objectives of nuclear disarmament.

The draft resolution is more fair and equitable than the one we have just voted on — A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1. It is, however, less categorical and clear in its perspective than the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.47, sponsored by Myanmar and other non-aligned countries, which the Committee has also adopted.

We see the positive aspect of this draft resolution as being a recognition of the link between nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and also a recognition of the realities of the existence of five nuclear-weapon States and certain other States which also have nuclear capability or now possess nuclear weapons.

However, the demands which have been made in the draft resolution on these respective categories of States are somewhat unclear and unequal. Whereas the nuclear-weapon States are asked to conduct negotiations in accordance with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the two major nuclear Powers are urged to pursue the START talks, to integrate these into a seamless process of negotiations between all five nuclear-weapon States, and to accept a de-alerting of their nuclear weapons.

On the other hand, the nuclear-weapons-capable States are asked to reverse their programmes, immediately accept the NPT, accept full-scope safeguards and take measures which are unrelated to their security environment. My delegation does not believe that the steps that are required to be taken by any State — be it nuclear-weapon, nuclear-weapon-capable or non-nuclear — should be unrelated to the security environment and the security compulsions which that State confronts.

In the region of South Asia, we now have a situation in which, as a result of the nuclear-weapon explosions, as a result of the declaration by one State of nuclear-weapon status, and as a result of an acute conventional imbalance, my country is obliged to rely on the deterrence effects of nuclear capability to prevent aggression. Therefore, like the representative of France, I would like to say that deterrence remains a fundamental element of our defence strategy.

The representative of the United States has further elaborated on this concept of deterrence and has underlined that this concept has preserved the peace for 50 years. We trust that South Asia, which has seen three wars in the last 50 years, will see no further wars in the next 50 years.

We too have the right, under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, to self-defence. That is the right which we exercised when we conducted our nuclear explosions of 28 and 30 May. It is therefore quite strange that the nuclear-weapon States should nitpick on this draft resolution because it does not refer to these tests. If there were such a reference, it would be in the category of the draft resolution adopted by this Committee last night — the unfair and discriminatory draft resolution on South Asia. That would be also in the category of disarmament measures which are meant to make one feel good but achieve nothing.

It is unfortunate that, due to the unacceptable provisions contained in draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, my delegation will be obliged to vote against the draft resolution as a whole. We nevertheless appreciate and understand the initiative taken by its sponsors and wish to state this publicly, although we disagree strongly with some of the elements that they have included.

The Chairman: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote before the vote.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 as a whole.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Armenia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Hungary, India, Israel, Latvia, Lithuania, Monaco, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bhutan, Canada, China, Croatia, Denmark, Micronesia (Federated States of), Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Luxembourg, Marshall Islands, Myanmar, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, Spain, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, as a whole, was adopted by 97 votes to 19, with 32 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of Guinea informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I shall now call on those members who wish to make statements in explanation of vote.

Mr. Millim (Luxembourg) (*interpretation from French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the three Benelux countries — Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg — as well as Denmark, Spain, Finland, Iceland and Portugal.

It was with regret that these eight countries abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, proposing a new agenda for nuclear disarmament. I say "regret", because this draft resolution contains many positive elements to which we could subscribe. We too call on States that have not yet done so to adhere unconditionally and without delay to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); to conclude full-scope safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency and to conclude additional protocols to those agreements; and to sign and ratify, unconditionally and without delay, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We, too, believe that it is important that the Conference on Disarmament pursue and conclude, without delay, the negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. We, too, support the proposal that the Conference on Disarmament establish a subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament — a proposal similar to that made by Belgium a few months ago. We, too, continue to encourage and support the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones everywhere possible.

We eight countries thus subscribe unequivocally to the basic objective of nuclear disarmament: the total elimination of such weapons. With others, we are tirelessly exploring every avenue that might lead to that end. But, to arrive there, the consistency of the draft resolution must equal the determination of its authors. That does not seem to be the case here. Three imperfections in particular should be emphasized.

The first relates to the alarmist tone of the text, based on an analysis that we do not share. By concluding with the need for a new agenda, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 reveals dissatisfaction with the previous one and a lack of faith in its future. Our countries do not share this view. We are pleased to have directly benefitted from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. We appreciate the results of the START process and have confidence in its future. Neighbours of France and Great Britain, we draw satisfaction from their unilateral decisions in regard to nuclear disarmament. We encourage them and China to participate in a plurilateral mechanism, as mentioned in the eleventh preambular paragraph of the draft resolution. It is inaccurate and dangerous to reject the existing agenda on the grounds that it has neither born fruit nor promises to bear any.

Our eight countries believe that progress on nuclear disarmament can only be achieved by means of the processes now under way — processes founded on article

VI of the NPT and inspired by the 1995 principles and objectives. We cannot support the proposal for an international conference on nuclear disarmament while we have on the near horizon the year 2000 Review Conference of the NPT and another special session of the Assembly on disarmament. The present agenda has demonstrated its value, we find it appropriate, and we have not ceased to believe that it holds promise for the future.

Finally, it is a matter of concern that a draft resolution of no fewer than 37 paragraphs says nothing about a major event, the nuclear tests in South Asia, except — and this only makes us more cautious — to introduce, in paragraph 7, an unacceptable ambiguity regarding the status of the "three States that are nuclear-weapons capable". For the States parties to the NPT there can be only the categories of States defined by the Treaty: nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States.

I would like to conclude by again emphasizing the firm intention of the Benelux countries, as well as of Denmark, Spain, Finland, Iceland and Portugal, to support any approach that might advance the cause of nuclear disarmament. Without doubt the road is long, but it is clear. It does not seem desirable to call into question the existing processes, which have been effective in the past and hold promise for the future.

Mr. Li Changhe (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): China fully understands the international community's desire for nuclear disarmament and the importance it accords to the question. China has always supported a total ban on nuclear weapons and their complete destruction so that humanity may be freed from the threat of nuclear war and so that a nuclear-weapon-free world may soon be built.

As a nuclear-weapon State, China has never evaded its own responsibility for nuclear disarmament, and it is ready to fulfil its obligations. From the very day it acquired nuclear weapons, China has undertaken never to be the first to use such weapons, under any circumstances. It has also undertaken unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State or nuclear-weapon-free zone.

China has never participated in any nuclear arms race, and it is against the doctrine of nuclear deterrence based on the first use of nuclear weapons. Our position is an important contribution that China is making in its own way to the final goal of a complete ban on, and thorough destruction of, nuclear weapons.

It is our view that the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) does not imply that the nuclear-weapon States can possess nuclear weapons for ever. They should intensify their efforts to fulfil their obligations under article VI of the NPT. Countries with the largest and most sophisticated nuclear weapons should continue to drastically reduce their nuclear weapons, renounce the doctrine of nuclear deterrence and stop research and development on outer space weapons and missile defence systems that would destabilize the global balance, so that favourable conditions may be created for other nuclear-weapon States to participate in the negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament.

The sponsors of the draft resolution consulted the Chinese delegation many times and listened to our views. For that we would like to express our appreciation. China favours the objective of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 — namely, to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world — and we favour some of the steps mentioned in it. For example, it calls upon nuclear-weapon States to review their nuclear policies and to negotiate and conclude an internationally legally binding instrument to provide security assurances to the non-nuclear-weapon States, and calls for the enhancement of the NPT's universality.

We have also taken note of some other measures in the draft resolution. However, given the great disparities in the nuclear forces of the nuclear-weapon States, and given that a few countries still cling to the doctrine of nuclear deterrence based on the first use of nuclear weapons, it is premature to ask all the nuclear-weapon States to adopt the same measures.

It was for those reasons that the Chinese delegation abstained on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): We have one hour left to conclude our work. I therefore encourage delegations to be brief.

Mr. Sungar (Turkey): I would like to explain the considerations which led my Government to cast a "No" vote on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

It is true that the international community aspires to a world free of nuclear weapons. It is equally true that nuclear weapons cannot simply be wished away. Systematic and progressive efforts on the part of nuclear-weapon States are essential to the reduction of nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating them, within the framework of general and complete disarmament. Moreover, the existence of a broad agenda and its step-by-step realization would demonstrate to the international community that the obligations and commitments undertaken by all States are being fulfilled.

As a State party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), we firmly believe not only that we have a broad agenda, as contained in the principles and objectives document agreed at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, but also that progress has been achieved, not least by the agreement reached in the Conference on Disarmament on the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on a fissile material cut-off treaty, which was identified as the next step following the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Turkey is convinced that the NPT strengthened review process is the appropriate forum to determine the necessary steps after the conclusion of the fissile material cut-off treaty and to set new objectives on non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. For this reason, we fail to see the utility of yet another international conference, as proposed in operative paragraph 14 of this draft resolution, at a time when the international community is adopting cost-saving measures.

The draft resolution that the Committee has just adopted states in its fifth preambular paragraph that

> "the Nuclear-Weapon States have not fulfilled speedily and totally their commitment to the elimination of their nuclear weapons".

In our view, sharing this assessment on the one hand, and voting in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1 on the other, would be inconsistent. We are convinced that significant steps have already been taken, as outlined in resolution 52/38 M of 1997, entitled "Bilateral nuclear arms negotiations and nuclear disarmament", which the international community recognized and endorsed overwhelmingly. The same considerations prompted us to co-sponsor draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1 this year as well, and it was adopted yesterday.

Despite our objection to the main thrust of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, it incorporates language that we could support. Besides those paragraphs that were put to a separate vote, there are some other paragraphs dealing with the START process, IAEA safeguards, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the NPT strengthened review process, and nuclear-weapon-free zones which we associate ourselves with. Had these paragraphs been put to a separate vote, we would have voted in favour.

In sum, Turkey's negative vote should in no way be construed as our opposition to the lofty goals of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. On the contrary, we believe that these objectives, as defined by the NPT, could be achieved by the active participation and contribution of all States — nuclear and non-nuclear.

Mr. Moher (Canada): After a period of very careful, intense and high-level consideration and consultation, Canada abstained on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1. For several weeks Canada worked constructively with the draft resolution's sponsors. In the course of this work, we were gratified by their determination and by their clear commitment to build the broadest possible base of support. Canada would obviously, also, like to see that objective achieved. While it has come a long way in this direction, on balance our conclusion is that there is still more to be achieved in that respect.

This Committee is well aware of Canada's commitment to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation as a core dimension of our broader pursuit of greater international peace and security. It is also aware of our unequivocal commitment to all aspects of the nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime — a regime founded on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its associated instruments.

The Canadian people are committed to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. In recognition of this commitment and of the challenges we face as we approach the new millennium, the Canadian Parliament has undertaken a study of Canada's nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation policy. Its report will likely be presented in the next few weeks. The Canadian Government will wish to take that report into account, as it continues to promote the objectives of its arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation policy. Ultimately, the Canadian Government did not wish by today's vote to prejudge that process.

As delegations are aware, some countries have raised strong objections to the draft resolution; *inter alia*, these objections relate to their impressions that the draft resolution is rooted in "old-speak", that it does not adequately credit progress made in nuclear disarmament and that it makes no mention of the nuclear tests in India and Pakistan.

As a committed Member of the United Nations and of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Canada has examined each of these arguments very carefully. At the same time, we are deeply concerned that the NPT-based nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime is now under serious strain. From this perspective, we see the new agenda draft resolution as a timely and pointed reminder of the urgent need for further progress on both these fronts.

While we recognize that progress has been made on the nuclear disarmament front, we think there is both room and an imperative to make more. In the same manner, we have made it clear that nuclear proliferation is unacceptable. Canada accordingly looks forward to pursuing these issues, actively and forcefully, in the coming weeks and months with our friends and with our allies.

We note that the draft resolution calls for a review at next year's session of the General Assembly. Canada, for one, looks forward to this review and hopes that all those engaged in this debate will take maximum advantage of the intervening period to pursue the goal of the broadest based support, demonstrating a common resolve to sustain the NPT-based nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime in the face of pressing and potent challenges.

Mrs. Kunadi (India): My delegation has requested the floor to explain its position on the draft resolution just adopted, contained in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

My delegation has not commented substantively on this draft resolution on a previous occasion. Yesterday, Sir, you imposed time limits on speakers. Today, you are obviously in a benevolent mood and I, like others, will take advantage of this.

India positively assessed the joint ministerial declaration issued in Dublin on behalf of eight countries on 9 June this year. There are now, we understand, only seven of the original sponsors. Over the years, India has worked closely with several of the sponsors on disarmament issues in various forums.

We have noted that the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 goes far beyond the parameters of the joint ministerial declaration. It includes extraneous elements and formulations that were adopted in other forums. We reject prescriptive approaches concerning security issues, such as those contained in operative paragraph 7, which are not only extraneous to this draft resolution, but also completely divorced from reality on the ground. The draft resolution also tends to base policy recommendations on fallacious concepts, such as the following in paragraph 7:

> "those three States that are nuclear-weapons capable and that have not yet acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)".

This concept is analytically hollow and does not correspond to reality.

The reference to a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia not only borders on the absurd, but also calls into question one of the fundamental guiding principles for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, namely, that the arrangements for such zones should be freely arrived at among States of the region concerned. The deliberations of this Committee have once again demonstrated that there is no such consensus on the proposal for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia.

On operative paragraph 17, India abstained in the voting, as we do not see negative security assurances within the restrictive framework of the NPT.

Given the omnibus nature of this draft resolution, there is a surprising lack of any mention of the doctrines of first use of nuclear weapons which have been inherited from the cold-war years. Similarly, the draft resolution ignores efforts by certain countries, unconstrained by a partial treaty banning nuclear testing, to refine and modernize nuclear weapons for retention well into the next millennium. The ongoing efforts to build ballistic-missile defences could well have an unsettling effect on the delicate global strategic balance.

There is an intriguing absence of any reference to the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which remains the only consensus document on disarmament adopted by the international community as a whole. The Final Document contains a Programme of Action which remains only partially implemented. Any agenda for the future would necessarily have to take into account the starting premise for global disarmament contained in the Final Document.

The sponsors of this draft resolution sought to portray its recommendations as intended to revive some of the core understandings of the NPT. My delegation's views on that Treaty are well known, and we sympathize with those that have been striving unsuccessfully over the years, including at the second session this year of the Preparatory Committee for the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, to get the self-anointed five nuclear-weapon States to make unequivocal commitments to nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The draft resolution is silent on the multifarious sources of proliferation which the NPT has failed to stem. We believe that the success of any international effort such as this, however worthy and energetic in its own right, would be limited by the unequal and discriminatory framework of obligations enshrined in the NPT. The new agenda cannot succeed in the old framework of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

My delegation has noted carefully the reactions of certain delegations to this draft resolution. The nuclear-weapon States, which have yet to provide an unequivocal commitment to the speedy and total elimination of nuclear weapons, as called for in operative paragraph 1, have sought to justify their opposition to this draft resolution by citing the lack of any critical reference to the nuclear tests that took place in May this year. This is not a draft resolution on nuclear testing. Therefore, the statements of such delegations, which we reject, are evidence of their desire to use the tests that took place in South Asia as an excuse to oppose any proposal that would invite them to undertake unequivocal commitments to nuclear disarmament.

The commitment of India to nuclear disarmament, unlike that of the other nuclear-weapon States, remains firm and we remain ready to contribute to universal nuclear disarmament in a non-discriminatory framework. India would have preferred this draft resolution to include proposals contained in the Final Document of the twelfth summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, representing five sixths of humanity, held in South Africa, one of the sponsors of this draft resolution. This Final Document includes concrete proposals towards a nuclear-weapon-free world, particularly the call for an international conference with the objective of reaching agreement on the phased elimination of nuclear weapons. Similarly, we would have preferred the designation of the use of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, as a crime against humanity within the purview of the International Criminal Court. However, India did not press ahead with its amendments, in deference to the wishes of some of the sponsors of this draft resolution and in the hope that these points would find a suitable place in the resolution in the future.

In conclusion, although my delegation also shares the objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons and the need to work for a nuclear-weapon-free world, we remain unconvinced of the utility of an exercise bound by flawed and discriminatory approaches of the NPT. We therefore cast a negative vote on the draft resolution as a whole.

Mr. Balboni Acqua (Italy): I am taking the floor to explain the position of the Government of Italy on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

Italy decided to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution. Being determined to pursue nuclear disarmament globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating all nuclear weapons, the Government of Italy shares the motivation of the draft resolution. We believe that there is a need to intensify the international efforts in this field, in particular by exploiting the momentum created by the achievements to date and the future promise of the START process. However, the draft resolution raises some concerns which relate to the means it envisages rather than to the ends it aims at.

In other words, Italy is not convinced that the cause of nuclear disarmament, which we fully support, would be advanced by a draft resolution which puts forward a concept not consistent with the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and which considers strategies which might undermine the Treaty's effectiveness and credibility. Moreover, we believe that a more balanced text, better reflecting the results already achieved in the area of nuclear disarmament, would have been instrumental in intensifying the dialogue between nuclear and non-nuclear States. Italy, for its part, intends to continue to firmly pursue this goal, in line with the perception shared by its Government, Parliament and public opinion that nuclear disarmament is the primary responsibility of nuclear-weapon States but is also in the undeniable interest of the entire international community.

For the reasons I have stressed, Italy decided to abstain, in order to avoid any misunderstanding with regard to our commitment to nuclear disarmament, but also to voice our concern as to the means envisaged by a draft resolution whose goal we share.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): I have asked for the floor to explain Norway's vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

Nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation have been long-standing Norwegian policy objectives. It is necessary to halt the spread of nuclear weapons and to significantly reduce and ultimately eliminate existing nuclear arsenals. Disarmament in general is the responsibility of all States, but when it comes to nuclear disarmament the nuclear-weapon States bear the primary responsibility. It is essential to secure their active participation in any nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation endeavours.

Norway supports the reasoning behind the draft resolution. There is a need for initiatives which can revitalize our way of dealing with nuclear issues multilaterally. We also share its ultimate goal of the global elimination of nuclear weapons and the desire to approach these issues in a more practical and constructive way. We are, however, not convinced that this draft resolution in its present form will be as conducive to a more constructive and dynamic climate for multilateral discussions in this field as we would have liked. We have in the discussions pointed out several problematic elements in the text and formulations that we cannot agree with.

In essence, there are five main reasons why Norway was not in a position to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

First, the language in the preambular as well as the operative part is too confrontational and categorical regarding the nuclear-weapon States and may not contribute to a strengthened multilateral dialogue on nuclear disarmament issues.

Secondly, the draft resolution does not duly recognize the significant steps that had in fact been taken by nuclear-weapon States in the area of nuclear disarmament. We would like to see the realities reflected more clearly, and believe that the draft resolution would then be more likely to facilitate a climate for further improvement in this field.

Thirdly, in our view the draft resolution reflects a lack of balance, in the sense that it is critical of the way in which the nuclear-weapon States fulfil their nuclear disarmament obligations, while it does not properly address the recent nuclear tests in South Asia.

Fourthly, we believe that an international conference on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation to complement efforts being made in other settings, as proposed by the resolution, would be redundant and that such a conference would have the potential to derail and undermine the strengthened review process of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Fifthly, the language of the draft resolution addressing the possible role of the Conference on Disarmament on questions related to nuclear disarmament and nuclear arms control is too ambiguous. Like other delegations, we do not believe that the Conference on Disarmament should be mandated to negotiate nuclear weapons reductions. Multilateral negotiations would only weaken the responsibility of the nuclear-weapon States to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament. On the other hand, we hope that the Conference on Disarmament can serve as a forum for exchange and use of information on all relevant issues in this field. We find that more precise language on this point, which clearly excludes the Conference on Disarmament from any role in negotiating nuclear forces, is called for.

Mr. Campbell (Australia): Australia was not able to support the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1. In essence, we believe the path the sponsors are advocating towards an ideal which we share, a world free of nuclear weapons, is not practical or realistic. Regrettably, there are no short cuts where the balance to verified drawdown of nuclear-weapon stocks and systems is concerned. For who would want to add new uncertainties and insecurities to the nuclear dispensation the cold war bequeathed to us?

Moreover, we do not accept what appears to be the premise of the new agenda draft resolution — that the current agenda, the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime as we know it, has failed or is in dire need of reanimation. In fact, thanks to the dedication and hard work of many States over the past 30-odd years, the regime is in impressively good shape, has evolved to meet new needs and challenges and has secured the allegiance of the quasi-totality of the planet. This has made possible remarkable progress in establishing and strengthening the instruments that underpin and embody that regime and, since the end of the cold war, in achieving deep cuts in the numbers of nuclear weapons in the world.

The number of States adhering to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is not only larger than this body itself, but continues to grow, including in this year. Certainly there is no room for complacency, as other events this year have shown, but neither have we hit an iceberg.

The approach of the draft resolution is also flawed in that it proposes a new international conference on nuclear disarmament with an ill-defined agenda which we believe will distract attention and energies away from the priority tasks of strengthening the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, achieving progress in the new negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, ensuring a successful year 2000 review conference of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and maintaining the good progress achieved to date in nuclear disarmament, notably under the START process.

Finally, Australia remains committed to the twin goals of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, as enshrined in the NPT, and will remain active in the pursuit of practical and realistic steps to ensure the Treaty's full implementation.

Mr. Seibert (Germany): Since the reasons for and against draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 have already been set out in great detail, I shall heed your advice, Mr. Chairman, and be very brief.

Germany abstained in the vote on the draft resolution. The Federal Republic of Germany welcomes in the draft resolution the commitment to nuclear disarmament, with the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, but believes that this goal can best be achieved through the speedy continuation of the step-by-step process of nuclear disarmament.

The Chairman: That statement was indeed very brief. I call on Japan, and hope that it will follow suit.

Mr. Hayashi (Japan): I am not sure that I can, Mr. Chairman.

As a nation that experienced the devastation of nuclear bombs, Japan really shares the strong desire to seek a world free from nuclear weapons, the desire that is behind the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon free world: the need for a new agenda". Thus, my delegation had extensive consultations with the sponsors of the draft resolution, which I believe contains many elements, particularly in the operative paragraphs, that we can share.

In fact, there are a number of common ingredients in this draft resolution and the nuclear disarmament draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, which we put forward and which was adopted a few minutes ago.

Consequently, my delegation's decision to abstain on the current draft resolution was not easy. We were obliged to do so as, in our view, it went just a little too far and contained some elements that are a little premature, in spite of the many elements we share.

For example, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 speaks, in the second preambular paragraph, of "the prospect of the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons" and says, in the fifth preambular paragraph, that "the Nuclear-Weapon States have not fulfilled speedily and totally their commitment to the elimination of their nuclear weapons". The fact is that the nuclear-weapon States have committed themselves, in written documents, to the elimination of nuclear weapons. They have also already achieved a significant reduction in their nuclear arsenals, and there are commitments to further reductions, even though these may not have been to the satisfaction of those who expect even more.

My delegation believes that, given the complexity and difficult nature of the issue, we should try harder to nurture a new consensus involving the nuclear-weapon States, so that we can make steady, step-by-step progress towards the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. Japan believes that the draft resolution it proposed, which was adopted today, is an effort in this direction. From this point of view, my delegation is also concerned about operative paragraphs 14 and 19 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

Again, while my delegation was obliged to abstain in the voting on this draft resolution, we appreciate the efforts made by its sponsors and look forward to continuing our dialogue with them, with the common objective of a world free from nuclear weapons.

Mr. Calovski (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 addresses a very important aspect of nuclear disarmament. We appreciate the efforts of its sponsors to enhance the process and promote the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world, which every State, nuclear or non-nuclear, shares. At the same time, the draft resolution reaffirms many positions which have been affirmed many times in this Committee and in many other forums. We share these views.

However, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 was not drafted to meet the expectations of all Member States. In our view, achieving the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world is possible only when both nuclear and non-nuclear

States are in agreement. We hope that this can be achieved by future consultation.

Mr. Cho (Republic of Korea): My delegation would like to explain its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1. As we have said on many occasions, the Republic of Korea has consistently supported international efforts to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and achieve the ultimate goal of building a nuclear-weapon-free world.

In that regard, my delegation appreciates the efforts of the sponsors of this draft resolution aimed at bringing forward a new agenda towards a nuclear-weapon-free world. We understand the main thrust of this draft resolution. In fact, some elements — such as operative paragraph 8, related to the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); operative paragraph 9, related to full-scope safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency; and operative paragraph 10, related to early entry into force of and universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) — are issues that we in the Republic of Korea feel particularly strongly about, in upholding the principles and objectives of the non-proliferation regime.

However, we find that the draft resolution contains several drastic elements that are unrealistic and inappropriate from the viewpoint of our basic position on security and nuclear disarmament. In our view, any nuclear disarmament measure should be based on an appropriate blend of idealism and realism. Too bold an initiative will make little progress, while too mundane an approach will have little prospect of success. The right answer to our quest for a nuclear-weapon-free world must be found in the middle ground between the two ends of the spectrum. A practical, step-by-step, focused approach based on clear vision is required on the road to the ultimate goal of eliminating nuclear weapons.

In our view, we must admit the reality that no country would dare to compromise its security for the sake of disarmament. An improved global strategic environment, coupled with enhanced mutual confidence, is a prerequisite for realizing meaningful nuclear disarmament.

For all those reasons, we decided to abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): I would like to explain Algeria's position on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda".

Algeria strongly supports nuclear disarmament and every effort to achieve a nuclear-free world. My country has also expressed its position on all nuclear tests, and we reject possession of nuclear weapons for any reason, including nuclear deterrence.

We welcome the efforts of the sponsors of this initiative, but my delegation believes that the draft resolution, important though it is, and though we agree with many of its ideas, poses some problems.

First, besides giving the impression of offering an alternative to the Non-Aligned Movement's doctrine on nuclear disarmament, it refers to the results of the Canberra Commission — whose achievements my country would, in passing, salute — but completely disregards the proposal for a phased programme of nuclear disarmament.

The multilateralization of nuclear disarmament efforts is not highlighted in this text and does not stand out clearly. To give a certain status to countries other than those identified by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) seems to us inappropriate.

Operative paragraph 10, in our view, should be reformulated, since adhering to an international legal instrument, being by nature a sovereign act, should not be subject to any limitation or restriction, even with regard to an instrument related to disarmament.

For all those reasons, my delegation was unable to vote in favour of the draft resolution. We abstained, and we hope that in the coming years the promoters of this initiative will find language that is more acceptable to many States, including my own.

Mr. Kaba (Guinea) (*interpretation from French*): For various reasons, we were unable to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1. I should like to stress that if our delegation had been present we would have voted in favour of the draft resolution, as it reflects the concerns of our country with regard to completely freeing the world from all nuclear threats.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.

United Nations

A/C.1/53/PV.31

General Assembly
Fifty-third

Official Records

First Committee

31st Meeting
Friday, 13 November 1998, 3 p.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Mernier . . . . (Belgium)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda items 63 to 80 (*continued*)

Action on all draft resolutions submitted under all items

The Chairman: Members have before them informal paper number 10, containing a list of draft resolutions on which action remains to be taken.

I call on the representative of New Zealand in connection with draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11, "Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty".

Mr. Pearson (New Zealand): Adopted just over two years ago, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has now been signed by over 150 States, 21 of which have ratified it. The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and its provisional Technical Secretariat are now well established in Vienna, and good progress is being made towards the establishment of the global verification system.

Last year, the General Assembly made no pronouncement on the status of the implementation of the CTBT. This year, Australia, Fiji, Mexico and New Zealand submitted draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11, because we consider it important and appropriate that the First Committee and the General Assembly should clearly demonstrate international support for the Treaty and a commitment to seeing it brought into force. The draft resolution before the Committee is straightforward. It has a single practical focus: to encourage further signatures and ratifications, and thus to promote the Treaty's early entry into force and the achievement of universal adherence.

The sponsors made a genuine effort to consult widely, with the purpose of reaching a text that could be adopted by consensus. Unfortunately, other issues have been at the forefront in the Committee, and we have not been able in the time available to achieve our aim.

The sponsors therefore propose to withdraw draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11.

The Chairman: I call on representatives wishing to make statements at this stage.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): In the light of the statement that has just been made by the representative of New Zealand, it is obvious that Pakistan will not insist on its proposed amendments to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11, contained in document A/C.1/53/L.53.

The Chairman: Is the representative of Pakistan prepared to consider draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11 without amendment?

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I understood from the statement by the representative of New Zealand that the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11 were withdrawing that text. It is in that light that we are willing to withdraw our amendments to the draft resolution.

Mr. Sorreta (Philippines): Before we go into sudden withdrawal with all these texts, let me say that we are a little disappointed to hear that the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11 will be withdrawing it. Many of us are parties to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and have worked very hard to create the

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provisional Technical Secretariat of the CTBT Organization and to see it established in Vienna. We have had no resolution on the CTBT since the adoption of the Treaty itself.

We would urge the representative of Pakistan to reconsider the amendments he has proposed. We have seen this before; we saw it during the negotiations on the CTBT and have seen it during the life of the CTBT. But the Treaty now has a life of its own. I believe many of us would beg the sponsors of the draft resolution to reconsider their decision to withdraw it. We also call on those delegations that have proposed amendments if possible to reconsider their decision to put their amendments to the vote if the draft resolution is submitted again.

Mr. Fruchtbaum (Solomon Islands): The Solomon Islands delegation supports the statement just made by the representative of the Philippines. My delegation had looked forward eagerly to a knock-down drag-out fight to end a week of some of the finest theatre now showing in New York City. We indeed hope that the withdrawal of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11 will be reconsidered.

Ms. Stener (Norway): My country is a signatory of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and we are in the process of ratifying the Treaty. We would like to reaffirm our commitment to the Treaty by voting on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11 in unamended form. I take this opportunity therefore to support the appeal by the representative of the Philippines to the sponsors of the amendments to withdraw the amendments to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11.

Mr. Shin (Republic of Korea): For the reasons stated by the representative of the Philippines, my delegation would like to echo the appeal made to the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11 to reconsider their withdrawal of that text.

Mr. Hayashi (Japan): As members know, Japan is among the countries that have both signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Japan attaches great importance to that Treaty, and therefore supported the straightforward draft resolution on the CTBT contained in document A/C.1/53/L.11. My delegation considers it important and appropriate for the First Committee to pronounce itself on that draft resolution in order to express the importance it attaches to the Treaty. I therefore add my voice to those of previous speakers in support of the statement made a moment ago by the representative of the Philippines.

Mr. De Icaza (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The representative of New Zealand has already explained why the sponsors wish to withdraw draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11. It is because we attribute the highest importance to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and we would like to have a consensus. Unfortunately, time constraints — and especially because the Committee's attention is on other important matters — have prevented agreement on a text that would command consensus. We believe that the call for the signing and ratification of the Treaty should not be questioned. That is why we do not want to put this text to a vote; we do not want small differences over drafting to give the wrong message regarding how we feel about the Treaty as a whole.

All delegations certainly have the right under rule 80 [122] of the rules of procedure to reintroduce any draft resolution that has been withdrawn. If some delegations feel that it is more important to state their positions on this draft resolution than it is to preserve the integrity of the Treaty and not submit the call for ratification to a divided vote, let them assume responsibility for that.

My delegation has only one remaining doubt. That has to do with paragraph 4 of the draft resolution. If we recall correctly, last year there was a decision by the Committee — not a draft resolution, but a decision pure and simple — to place on this year's agenda the item entitled "Implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty".

I would appreciate it very much if you, Mr. Chairman, would suspend the meeting briefly to give us an opportunity to see whether we can reach agreement on a mere decision to be adopted by consensus to place on next year's agenda the item entitled "Implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty".

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): Allow me to summarize the situation. We have before us a draft resolution, which is itself the subject of two draft amendments introduced by India and Pakistan respectively. The sponsors have agreed to withdraw the draft resolution. At the same time, several delegations are calling for the sponsors of the draft amendments to withdraw the amendments and for the draft resolution to be the subject of consensus. There is now a third possibility, which has just been proposed by the Ambassador of Mexico. I myself was going to propose a suspension of the meeting. If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Committee agrees to a suspension so that delegations may consult on the best way to proceed.

The meeting was suspended at 3.25 p.m and resumed at 3.45 p.m.

Mr. Pearson (New Zealand): It seems there is agreement that the Committee will consider a draft decision on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and I would propose that it be worded:

> "The General Assembly, on the recommendation of the First Committee, recalling its resolution 50/245 of 10 September 1996, decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session the item entitled 'Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty'".

Mrs. Kunadi (India): We request a vote on this proposed draft decision.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): Since no delegations wish to explain their position at this stage, I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to vote on an oral proposal for a draft decision of the First Committee entitled "Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty", which will be issued in document A/C.1/53/L.65. The text of the draft decision would read:

> "The General Assembly, on the recommendation of the First Committee, recalling its resolution 50/245 of 10 September 1996, decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session the item entitled 'Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty'."

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Bhutan, India, Lebanon, Syrian Arab Republic

Draft decision A/C.1/53/L.65 was adopted by 135 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote on the draft decision just adopted.

Mrs. Kunadi (India): The Committee is aware of the circumstances leading to India's standing aside from the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1996. After concluding a limited series of tests in May this year, India announced a voluntary moratorium on further underground nuclear test explosions. We have conveyed our willingness to move forward to a *de jure* formalization of this obligation.

India, having harmonized its national imperatives and security obligations, and desirous of continuing to cooperate with the international community, is now engaged in discussions with key interlocutors on a range of issues, including the CTBT. As the Prime Minister of India stated before the General Assembly on 24 September 1998, India is

> "prepared to bring these discussions to a successful conclusion, so that the entry into force of the CTBT is not delayed beyond September 1999". (*A/53/PV.13, p. 19*)

During the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, India sought to place the Treaty in a disarmament framework by proposing its linkage to a time-bound programme for the universal elimination of nuclear weapons. The Treaty that emerged remained a partial measure.

India voted against resolution 50/245, by which the CTBT was adopted. Therefore, we abstained in the voting on the draft decision just adopted.

Mr. Sorreta (Philippines): Not surprisingly, the Philippines is somewhat disappointed at not having a draft resolution on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) this year. However, it is our hope that the decision we have taken not to push for a draft resolution and just to have a draft decision will contribute, perhaps, to our having a CTBT resolution next year with very interesting and more welcome results.

Mr. Shin (Republic of Korea): We supported draft decision A/C.1/53/L.65, which the Committee has just adopted. This does not mean that we were satisfied with having no draft resolution this year on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which my delegation regards as very important. If the original draft resolution in document A/C.1/53/L.11 had not been withdrawn by the sponsors, we would have supported it very strongly.

The adoption of the CTBT by the General Assembly in 1996 was hailed as another great achievement of the international community towards strengthening the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. The cessation of all nuclear testing will no doubt constitute a meaningful step conducive to deterring the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to the realization of a systematic process to achieve nuclear disarmament.

However, as was made obvious by the nuclear testing in South Asia last May, the task of strengthening the global nuclear non-proliferation regime requires, more urgently than ever, stepped-up vigilance against future nuclear testing by any other States. In this endeavour, we strongly believe that it is crucial to achieve the CTBT's entry into force and universal adherence to it at the earliest possible date. We hope that the international community can work closely together towards this common objective of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons to achieve the eventual goal of nuclear disarmament.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I call on the representative of India on a point of order.

Mrs. Kunadi (India): I think this is a mere formality now, but we had submitted an amendment (A/C.1/53/L.64) to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11. We would now, of course, formally withdraw that amendment, since the draft resolution in document A/C.1/53/L.11 has also been withdrawn.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I call on the representative of the Solomon Islands, whose request to speak earlier today went unheeded.

Mr. Fruchtbaum (Solomon Islands): I take the floor in order to put a proposal in particular to the Department for Disarmament Affairs and others who may be interested in the First Committee. When you ended the meeting this morning, Mr. Chairman, you wielded your gavel with the speed and authority of a Hollywood cowboy gunfighter at the OK Corral, and I am afraid that my sweet voice was not heard and my waving arms were not seen, which is why I should like to speak now.

My proposal derives from the discussion this morning concerning draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda". A number of representatives, particularly from the nuclear-weapon Powers, made the point — we have heard it on a number of occasions during this session and in previous sessions — that the strategy of nuclear deterrence ended the cold war and kept the peace. That statement has been made with such authority on a number of occasions, such as this morning, as to seem to indicate that there is no possibility of disagreement. As a university history teacher regularly facing young people who ask very difficult questions, I have long come to doubt the truthfulness of that claim for the strategy of nuclear deterrence. Therefore, I suggest that serious consideration be given to having at the Committee's next session at least a one-day forum, with a morning and an afternoon meeting, at which that issue — how the strategy of nuclear deterrence ended the cold war and kept the peace — can be debated.

Please let those permanent members of the Security Council that make that claim bring their historians, their political scientists and their military strategists to make the argument, and let those of us who have serious doubts about it be able to respond in a very real and serious debate and dialogue. I think, and the Solomon Islands delegation thinks, that that would be most helpful in trying to get at some better and balanced understanding about that claim.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): We will now take up draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.24/Rev.1, entitled "The Conference on Disarmament decision to establish, under item 1 of its agenda entitled 'Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament' an ad hoc committee to negotiate, on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator (CD/1299) and the mandate contained therein, a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices".

I first call on those delegations wishing to speak in explanation of their position before action is taken on the draft resolution.

Mr. Grey (United States of America): I have asked for the floor to address the amendments contained in document A/C.1/53/L.51 which are proposed to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.24/Rev.1. In our view, these amendments are neither necessary nor helpful in encouraging the Conference on Disarmament to continue its long awaited negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator and the mandate contained therein. The consensus to establish the Ad Hoc Committee was fragile. The negotiations ahead will be complex and no doubt difficult, and its terms of reference provide for the consideration of the kinds of ideas reflected in the amendments put forward by Pakistan.

Like the Governments of most nations represented here, my Government condemned the nuclear tests by India last May, as well as those subsequently conducted by Pakistan. That having been said, from our perspective we believe that following the nuclear tests last May we have made some progress with Pakistan and India in addressing our non-proliferation and disarmament interests. For its part, the United States wants to put its relations with Pakistan and India on a better footing. We also welcome the resumption of dialogue between India and Pakistan, which we believe is crucial to addressing the core issues of their dispute.

We are also well aware that the current economic crisis affecting much of the world constitutes a grave challenge to Pakistan's stability. To meet this challenge, President Clinton has decided to support international lending required to support an International Monetary Fund rescue package for Pakistan. He will discuss this and other issues in a meeting with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif next month. While Pakistan's economy will undoubtedly occupy part of the agenda between the two leaders, exploring ways to make further progress on non-proliferation and disarmament will be discussed as well.

We also welcome the fact that India and Pakistan have announced before the General Assembly their intention to adhere to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by September 1999 and to participate constructively in negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament for a fissile material cut-off. I note that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's statement on the fissile material cut-off treaty is perfectly consistent with the current text of the draft resolution before the Committee. For this reason, I appeal to my Pakistani colleague to withdraw his amendment to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.24/Rev.1 so that we can take action on the draft resolution as it is.

Mr. Goosen (South Africa): South Africa has long been a supporter of the negotiations for a fissile material treaty in the Conference on Disarmament. We believe that these negotiations are extremely important given the fact that fissile material is one of the most essential elements for the production of nuclear weapons. It is also our view that the fissile material treaty must constitute a disarmament measure and not only a non-proliferation measure. We also believe that to negotiate a fissile material treaty, it should form an integral step of a process of nuclear disarmament leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

South Africa would have supported the amendment proposed by Pakistan in document A/C.1/53/L.51 to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.24, if Pakistan had agreed to the deletion of the last few words of the amendment: "within a time-bound framework".

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Pakistan has consistently supported, for over 30 years, the goal of a treaty banning fissile materials. This goal has always been perceived by the international community as constituting a part of a comprehensive programme for nuclear disarmament leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. This is also the approach of the vast majority of the membership of the United Nations.

In my statement to this Committee on 30 October 1998, following the introduction of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.24 by the representative of Canada, I explained the rationale for the amendments which my delegation has proposed, which are contained in document A/C.1/53/L.51.

Briefly, these amendments seek, first, to reflect the fact that the ban on fissile material production should be part of a comprehensive phased programme for nuclear disarmament and that the treaty must be a disarmament treaty and not only a non-proliferation measure.

Secondly, the amendments seek to note the fact that there are continuing differences among Member States on the scope and objectives of the Treaty, despite the adoption of the so-called Shannon Report. By the draft resolution in document A/C.1/53/L.24/Rev.1, the General Assembly would welcome the decision of the Conference on Disarmament to establish an Ad Hoc Committee on this subject and encourage its re-establishment at the next session. Pakistan was able to join in the consensus for the commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on the basis of certain understandings and expectations which were evolved in our bilateral negotiations with the United States. These included our understanding that the objectives of South Asian security will be promoted through a cooperative rather than a coercive approach.

We were therefore deeply concerned at the initiative taken by the same country which has sponsored the draft resolution in A/C.1/L.24/Rev.1, on the fissile material treaty, to seek a denunciation specifically and singularly of the nuclear tests conducted in South Asia last May, without noting the distinctions between these tests and without taking into account the comprehensive framework for security which is required in South Asia.

I listened carefully to the statement by the Ambassador of the United States, urging Pakistan not to press the amendments in document A/C.1/53/L.51 to a vote. We appreciate the spirit in which this appeal to Pakistan has been made and we also appreciate the constructive dialogue which Pakistan and the United States are conducting, and which is not, I emphasize, on the basis of coercion, such as the coercion which is reflected in Security Council resolution 1172 (1998) or in the nuclear testing draft resolution which this Committee approved yesterday.

Our dialogue takes into account, as is absolutely essential, the security environment and compulsions in South Asia. We welcome the partial steps taken by the United States to promote a cooperative environment in its relations with Pakistan, and we look forward to the complete elimination of sanctions and restraints as soon as possible. This will be essential to create the environment in which Pakistan hopes to join in the resumption of negotiations on the fissile material treaty at the 1999 session.

The forthcoming negotiations on the fissile material treaty are likely to be difficult and long, perhaps as long as the title of the draft resolution under consideration. It will be essential to first reach agreement on the scope and objectives of the treaty, on which such deep differences remain. This treaty must constitute both a disarmament measure and a non-proliferation measure. I wish to underline in particular that a halt in the production of fissile material can be acceptable to Pakistan only if it is implemented within the context of such a multilaterally negotiated, universally applicable and non-discriminatory treaty on fissile material.

It is on this understanding, and in response to the appeal made by the United States, which was not a sponsor of the discriminatory draft resolution in document A/C.1/53/L.22, adopted yesterday, that the Pakistan delegation is prepared to agree not to press the amendments in document A/C.1/53/L.51 to a vote.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): The Committee will have taken note that Pakistan wishes to withdraw the proposed amendments in document A/C.1/53/L.51.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Cuba will not insist on a vote on the amendments in document A/C.1/53/L.51, which we co-sponsored, in order to facilitate the taking of a decision on the important text before the Committee and on the understanding that draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.24/Rev.1 in no way prejudges Cuba's final position on the scope and objectives of a future treaty prohibiting the production of fissile material.

As we have repeatedly stated both in the Conference on Disarmament and in this Committee, the treaty cannot become a new instrument for selective non-proliferation. Its scope must of necessity be broad. It must be a disarmament measure, one more step in the nuclear disarmament process and towards the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons.

Cuba therefore reserves the right to promote in the Conference on Disarmament its substantive positions

regarding the scope and objectives of the future treaty prohibiting the production of fissile material, if that body begins negotiations on the subject.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): The sponsors of the draft resolution wish it to be adopted without a vote. There being no objection, I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.24/Rev.1, entitled "The Conference on Disarmament decision to establish, under item 1 of its agenda entitled 'Cessation of the Nuclear Arms Race and Nuclear Disarmament' an ad hoc committee to negotiate, on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator (CD/1299) and the mandate contained therein, a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices", was introduced by the representative of Canada at the Committee's 19th meeting, on 30 October 1998, and was revised on 2 November 1998.

The sponsors are listed in the draft resolution and in document A/C.1/53/INF/2/Add.2 and Add.4. Greece and Bulgaria have also become sponsors.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): Does any delegation wish to explain its position before the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus? There being none, I take it that the Committee wishes to adopt the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.24/Rev.1 was adopted.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I call on the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran for an explanation of position after the decision.

Mr. Dehghani (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation joined the consensus on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.24/Rev.1. We attach great importance to a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

In this regard, we firmly believe that the negotiations should not be limited to the future production of fissile materials. As reflected in the Shannon Report, the reference to which in the draft resolution helped us to join the consensus, the mandate for the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee also includes negotiations on past fissile material production. Leaving out fissile material stockpiles would only legitimize the possession and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. Therefore, after the conclusion of the fissile material cut-off treaty, no fissile material, nuclear programme or facility should be allowed to remain outside international safeguards. The conclusion of the treaty on fissile material should also promote international cooperation for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): Since no other delegation wishes to speak, we have come to the end of the third stage of the work of the First Committee at its fifty-third session. All decisions on draft resolutions submitted under agenda items 63 to 80 have been taken.

Concluding statement by the Chairman

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I should now like to make the Chairman's traditional concluding statement. As my opening statement was in French, I shall make this statement in English.

(*spoke in English*)

We have concluded the last phase of the Committee's work, action on all draft resolutions and decisions. I would like now to take this opportunity to share with members some reflections on the work of the First Committee as we come to the conclusion of its work during the fifty-third session.

At the outset, let me commend all delegations for the constructive atmosphere that has characterized our deliberations in the past few weeks. Our work reflects well on the image of the United Nations as an institution devoted to advancing the common interests of mankind, even on matters related to sovereign interests and national security. I wish to express my appreciation to all delegations for contributing to this positive atmosphere, which is conducive to confidence-building, peaceful change and disarmament.

At this juncture, let me highlight some issues that appear to have been notable in the deliberations of the First Committee during this session. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation received considerable attention, as well they should have, given the significance of these issues for international peace and security. The Committee gave due consideration to the progress that has been made in scaling down nuclear weapons at both the unilateral and bilateral levels and in reducing the risk of nuclear war. Yet the deliberations also reflected the conviction of most member

States that the nuclear disarmament process should continue at a more rapid pace.

The member States also demonstrated their strong support for the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), for the resumption of strategic nuclear arms reductions pursuant to the START process, and for the negotiation of a fissile material treaty.

This growing interest in accelerating the pace of nuclear disarmament has also been reflected in enlightened debate in this Committee over some new and innovative approaches to address the problem. I refer specifically to the deliberations on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48, "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world", and to the Committee's continuing recognition of the importance of nuclear-weapon-free zones, most recently with respect to their application in Central Asia and in Mongolia. Future historians will surely look upon 1998 as a year when the world's consciousness was abruptly raised about the magnitude and persistence of the global nuclear threat.

The nuclear tests this year in South Asia underscored several important lessons of the contemporary age, including a widespread public recognition that new nuclear armaments beget nuclear arms races, not disarmament. They reminded us that progress on non-proliferation cannot be taken for granted — an observation that continues to apply even though the membership of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has expanded this year to 187 upon Brazil's welcome decision to accede to that Treaty. These tests remind us once again that the potential horrors of nuclear war transcend national or regional geographic boundaries and hence require the urgent attention of all countries. And they remind us that nuclear disarmament is simultaneously a solemn national responsibility and a daunting global challenge. It is both appropriate and necessary, therefore, for the United Nations to remain closely engaged in deliberating on such issues.

I hope therefore that progress will be made in the next session of the Conference on Disarmament as it resumes its work on the fissile material treaty, negative security assurances and other issues that it may address, including the prevention of an arms race in outer space and further progress on nuclear disarmament.

With respect to chemical and biological weapons, there is a strong consensus in the Committee in support of ongoing efforts to strengthen the means to verify compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention and to bring that treaty — together with the Chemical Weapons Convention — closer to full universal membership.

Because many, if not most, disarmament issues involve profound global issues and interests, I also hope not only that the Disarmament Commission will continue its deliberations over the proposed special session on disarmament but that the General Assembly will ultimately convene such a session at the earliest possible date. On 20 January the Secretary-General stressed the central importance of disarmament to the global agenda and that "the United Nations has an essential role and primary responsibility in this field". It seems only fitting that an issue of such urgency should receive the level of attention that only a special session can provide. We must work collectively to achieve disarmament objectives, not just to debate them.

I note with some satisfaction that the world community is already making progress in achieving these objectives with respect to the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. The Committee has accomplished much in that field, especially in being able to speak with one voice on the need to curb illicit arms trafficking, a deadly activity that continues to kill civilians, frustrate aspirations for national economic development and jeopardize regional peace and security.

The Committee has also demonstrated its full confidence in the leadership and judgement of the Secretary-General, as reflected in draft resolutions seeking his assessments on several issues relating to small arms and light weapons. This confidence is echoed in the respect that the Department for Disarmament Affairs has earned from all countries for its highly professional work as it now concludes its first year after having been re-established by the Secretary-General. I believe that that is due mainly to the activity and competence of the Under-Secretary-General at the Department for Disarmament Affairs, Ambassador Dhanapala. I thank him on behalf of all of us.

As disarmament and its associated security benefits become more institutionalized in international society, I am convinced that success in this area will be accompanied by significant progress in achieving development objectives. As the Secretary-General stated in his recent report on the work of the Organization,

> "Human security and equitable and sustainable development turn out to be two sides of the same coin." (*A/53/1, para. 228*)

That is the approach that is reflected in the draft resolution on the relationship between disarmament and development and in repeated additional statements by the Secretary-General. My own Government has also recently advanced the concepts of sustainable development and sustainable disarmament with respect to small arms and light weapons.

Whether it was addressing global nuclear disarmament or more specific problems pertaining to the small arms trade, the Committee has addressed all of these issues responsibly by recognizing the uniqueness of specific local conditions, but never losing sight of the broader global context within which progress must be pursued and assessed.

With respect to landmines, different approaches to address this issue still exist. Some countries prefer the universalization of the Ottawa process and some strict compliance with, and greater adherence to, Amended Protocol II of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its review process. I have every confidence that, in the interests of the numerous victims of these weapons, States will continue to promote the achievement of the final goal of eliminating landmines altogether through ways and means acceptable to all parties concerned.

Among other innovative proposals that the Committee deliberated on was the draft resolution concerning developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, a subject that potentially affects the interests of all countries and future controls over both conventional and unconventional weapons.

On the few matters that have given rise to disagreement within the Committee, I am convinced that these issues will in time yield to the patient and dedicated actions of all members who recognize the need to build a new global consensus to address such problems.

On a personal note, as Chairman of the Committee, I should like to thank all members of the Committee most sincerely for the cooperation they have extended to me during this session. It was indeed a singular honour and privilege for me to work with people so distinguished and knowledgeable in the field of disarmament. I wish to thank you all sincerely for all your efforts.

I also wish to express my deepest thanks and gratitude to the Vice-Chairmen of the Committee — Ms. Akmaral Arystanbekova, Ambassador Raimundo González and Mr. Aleg Laptsenak of Belarus — and to the Rapporteur, Mr. Motaz Zahran. I am deeply grateful for their assistance, camaraderie, advice and *mise en garde*.

Let me, on behalf of the Committee, thank again the Under- Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, as well as the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung and all his collaborators in the Secretariat. I want to thank especially all the young people behind me who run as *voltigeurs* in the room to fish for information and agreement. I thank them for the good job they have done.

Last, but not least, I wish to extend a special word of thanks to our interpreters, translators, record keepers, press officers, conference officers and documents officers, who have been patient with us, the sound engineers and all those others who worked behind the scenes to bring the work of the Committee to a successful conclusion.

I should like here to interpolate an administrative communication, about the next session of substantive work of the First Committee.

Representatives may recall that at the current session we had some difficulty in setting the dates for the commencement of the substantive work of the First Committee owing to an overlap with other disarmament-related meetings that were taking place in Geneva. The work of the Committee this year was postponed for one week, but the decision to delay the work of the First Committee this year should not set a precedent for our future work. In accordance with established practice, the substantive work of the First Committee should commence immediately following the closure of the general debate in the General Assembly. The exact dates for the next substantive session will therefore be established by the General Assembly at a later date.

In accordance with the Committee's practice, I will now call on the representatives of Groups.

I call first on the representative of Sudan, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mrs. Ahmed (Sudan): The Group of African States fully associates itself with the statement which will be made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, to which we belong. On behalf of the Group of African States I wish to express our appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, and our congratulations on the successful manner in which you have conducted the work of the First Committee this year. The discipline that prevailed under your able leadership enabled the Committee to conclude its work as scheduled.

I also wish to express my appreciation to Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, Under-Secretary-General of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, and the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, whose presence enhanced the work of the Committee.

I also thank all the members of the Bureau, conference officers, interpreters, translators — all who contributed to our work.

In conclusion, on behalf of the African Group I wish to convey season's greetings and warm wishes for 1999.

The Chairman: I now call on the representative of Oman, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asian States.

Mr. Al-Hassan (Oman) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: Mr. Chairman, I am fully aware that this week was extremely hectic for you and for participating delegations, and I shall therefore be extremely brief. I hope that that will not be a problem for anyone, and that we shall all regard this concluding meeting as a good one.

I wish, on behalf of the countries that are members of the Group of Asian States, to associate myself with the remarks made by the representative of Sudan, whose statement on behalf of the African Group conveyed most sincere congratulations to you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau for the way in which the work of the Committee was conducted.There is no doubt that your diplomatic ability and your efforts helped us to reach practical and consensus solutions, leading to the gratifying and successful outcome of the work of the Committee in a timely fashion.

On behalf of the States members of the Asian Group, I cannot fail to thank Mr. Petrovsky and Mr. Abdel Kader Bensmail of the Conference on Disarmament, as well as Mr. Dhanapala, the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, for their persistent, quiet and meritorious participation, as well as for the role they have played in facilitating the work of the Committee.

The States of the Asian Group attach special importance to the work of the First Committee and are always ready to cooperate with other delegations and with the Chairman and the other Committee officers to achieve results acceptable to the entire international community, reflecting a spirit of participation, with a view to reaching the noble objectives to which we all aspire. We view negotiation as a principal characteristic of the work of the Committee, and one that is of singular importance.

Let me conclude, Mr. Chairman, by thanking you once again, and by expressing the hope that all members will enjoy further progress and a better and more prosperous future.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I call next on the representative of Romania, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. Gorita (Romania): As Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States for the month of November, I should like to convey to you, Mr. Chairman, our sincere congratulations and our gratitude for the able way in which you have guided the deliberations of the First Committee to a successful and timely conclusion. Your wide knowledge, diplomatic skill and experience played a very important role in helping us overcome the difficulties we faced and in reaching this outcome.

Our gratitude goes also to the other members of the Bureau and to all those who supported them so effectively as they carried out their responsibilities, particularly the Secretary of the Committee, whose long experience has again been very useful this year.

I would also like to extend our appreciation to the interpreters, translators and conference officers. Without their effective support, we would not have been able to complete our session. I thank them all very much.

The Chairman: The next speaker is the representative of Australia, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States.

Mr. Campbell (Australia): On behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, which my Permanent Representative, Ambassador Penelope Wensley, currently chairs, I wish to express to you, Sir, to Ambassador Dhanapala, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, to Mr. Petrovsky and Mr. Bensmail, Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament respectively, to the other members of the Bureau, to the Secretariat staff and not least to the interpreters and translators our appreciation for a job well done.

It has not been an easy session. Your steady hand on the Committee's tiller has steered us through the worst of the shoals. We are all facing a new and challenging year for the non-proliferation and disarmament regime, and we hope that by the time we reconvene in this place next year we will be able to do so in an environment in which substantial progress has been made towards meeting our common goals.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): The next speaker is the representative of Ecuador, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. Izquierdo (Ecuador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): As Chairman of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, I congratulate you most warmly, Sir, on the efficient way in which you have guided the work of the First Committee to a positive conclusion. Your abundant diplomatic experience was essential to the success of this exercise.

I wish also, through you, to congratulate the Vice-Chairmen, the Rapporteur, Mr. Motaz Zahran, and the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung. The Group of Latin American and Caribbean States conveys special thanks to Mr. Dhanapala, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, who has been with us throughout the session, and to Mr. Petrovsky and Mr. Bensmail, Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament respectively. Their experience has been a great asset in our work.

Our thanks go also to the members of the Secretariat staff, the conference officers, the interpreters and the translators for their exemplary work throughout the session that is now coming to a close.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I call next on the representative of South Africa, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Non-Aligned Countries.

Mr. Goosen (South Africa): On behalf of the States members of the Non-Aligned Movement and on behalf of other countries associated with the movement, I wish to extend our appreciation to you, Sir, and to the other members of the Bureau, as well as to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and the Secretary of the First Committee, for the way in which you have led our work.

We would also like to take this opportunity to extend our thanks to the Secretariat staff, the interpreters, the translators and other United Nations staff members who have been so essential to our work.

The Chairman: The next speaker is the representative of Austria, who will speak on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. Hajnoczi (Austria): We are about to close this year's session of the First Committee. Before we do, let me take this opportunity to say a few words of appreciation and thanks on behalf of the European Union, the Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated country Cyprus, and the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area.

I would like to offer you, Sir, our sincere congratulations on the successful conclusion of the Committee's work. This year, our proceedings included a number of challenging procedural debates, the handling of which was not always easy. Impressed by your chairmanship, I would like to offer you our heartfelt thanks for the excellent job you have done in making possible a comprehensive debate on the issues before us and orderly consideration of and action on all draft resolutions. I personally appreciated greatly your patience and impartiality and the serene way in which you conducted our business — as well as the necessary discipline that you so ably imposed on the Committee.

In the same vein, we wish also to thank the other members of the Bureau and all the staff of the Secretariat who supported them so effectively as they carried out their heavy responsibilities. A special word of gratitude goes to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Dhanapala.

I would like to thank the Secretary of the First Committee, Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung, who after many years of untiring service to this body will be leaving us soon to take up a different, but equally challenging and rewarding, function. We wish him all the best for his personal and professional future.

Our deep appreciation goes also to the excellent interpreters, translators, sound engineers and conference officers and to those responsible for producing and distributing documents. Without their effective and ubiquitous support for delegations in a literally very audible and visible manner, we would not have been able to complete our session so smoothly. I therefore thank them all very much for their invaluable contribution.

Finally, I would like to say how much importance we attach to good cooperation with all our colleagues present here in this room. In particular, we want to thank those with whom we have been engaged in direct negotiations. The European Union intends to continue these very fruitful discussions next year in the same spirit of mutual cooperation, and hopes that a constructive attitude will be adopted by all members. The European Union will equally endeavour to give the next Chairman of the First Committee its fullest support in the fulfilment of his high responsibilities.

With that positive look into the future, I wish once again, on behalf of all States associated with this statement, to congratulate you, Sir, on the outstanding way in which you chaired the Committee, and to extend to you our heartfelt gratitude.

The Chairman: The final speaker is the representative of Yemen, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

Mr. Al-Doais (Yemen) (*interpretation from Arabic*): On behalf of the Arab Group, I wish to convey to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the other members of the Bureau, my most sincere congratulations, thanks and appreciation for your meritorious and excellent efforts, courtesy, tact and patience, as well as your wise conduct of the work of the First Committee. I also wish to thank everyone who has worked here from the secretariat and interpretation and conference services for their excellent efforts during the meetings of the Committee. All this has been conducive to helping the First Committee achieve success within the time allotted to it.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): On my own behalf and in the name of those who have been thanked, I would simply say "Thank you".

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.